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ESSAYS

OF

BRITISH ESSAYISTS

INCLUDING BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL SKETCHES

WITH A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION BY

CHAUNCEY C. STARKWEATHER, A.B., LL.B.

REVISED EDITION

VOLUME I

NEW YORK

P. F. COLLIER & SON

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SPECIAL INTRODUCTION

THE essay will always be a popular form of literature. Not so profound as the philosophical treatise, it interests, entertains, and amuses the reader. Not dull with inconsequential details as history, it is cheery with pleasant banter and raillery. Not rising to the grandeur of epic sublimity, not soaring in the pure ether of poetic rapture, it has a kindly nod and smile and handshake for the every-day mortal of all the walks of life. It neither preaches nor commands; it suggests. And suggestion is often more effective than fulmination or homily. By its winsome manner a suggestion deprecates opposition, and friendly advice succeeds where decretals fail. So the power for good of the essayist is enormous. Without the animosity of partisan pamphleteering, without the formal authority of the pulpit, the essay may teach a thousand lessons of goodness and virtue.

We may find in the essay philosophy, but it is in gay attire; we may discover erudition, but it is presented with drawing-room graces and a cheery urbanity. There may be pronunciamentos, but they come from the library as a throne. The essay is the hyphen between erudition and the people. A sentence may be the crystallization of fifty books, which, perhaps ponderous and profound and technical, would never have come to the common household. A sparkling epigram may be the epitome of a life comedy. In touch with men and books, the essayist gives one an "epic in a paragraph." The essay is not a treatise. There is in it not so much demonstration as scintillation. It is not Euclid, it is a flashlight. It is not proof, it is representation. It is not persuasion, it is vision. An edict, a general order, a code, is not an essay.

The essay is a confession; we might almost say a chat. The keynote to the essay is its personality. The lack of this personality and individuality takes Cicero out of the ranks of perfect

essayists. He is too general, too remote, too stately, too formal. In the essay we should see the open fireplace, or the cool veranda. It is philosophy in its house-coat. The flames and smoke are not from an altar or a Delphic tripod, they are from the hearthstone.

In reading an essay you somehow feel as if you were the author's special audience, and were personally being "made something of," in that the writer is addressing you individually. This is because the essay is personal, conversational, direct, pithy, impulsive, and unpretending. It resembles a letter. Does it not seem as if the writer had in mind some particular friend or "intimate enemy" to whom his pages are addressed, although dedicated to the public? To this definite or imaginary person the author speaks of fashion, manners, character, books, or politics, avoiding mere scholasticism, or pedantry, or the vitriolic force of the philippic.

An essential quality of the essay is style. Whatever license of dulness or unevenness may be permitted to the writer of a long epic or history, the essayist must be alert, clear, concise, and polished. Obscureness is fatal, tediousness is suicidal. The manners of the camp, the acrimony of the forum, the technicality of the treatise, the ponderousness of the pulpit, are alike out of place. It is the courtly and debonair, the rapier thrust and not the bludgeon, the mobility and dash of the light cavalry and not the weight of the leviathan artillery, that one demands in the essay. In so far as one departs from these characteristics one leaves its true field.

Of course everyone knows that all the essayists hark back to Montaigne. It is a long cry, and yet they have not improved upon him, nor are they likely so to do. Like Walt Whitman Montaigne "celebrates himself," but so charmingly that interest in his works has never waned. The field of the English essay is very rich. Not to know the essayists is to have absolutely no adequate knowledge of English literature. They are of its very warp and woof. From Bacon down to the present day their names are among the brightest in the galaxy of English writers. If it be said that Bacon was too stately and severe, it may be remarked that this stateliness was part of his character, and that in his essays he unbent as much as he could, and his attitude is strictly individual.

How quaint is his dedication to the Duke of Buckingham! In this he says: "I do now publish my essays, which of all my works have been the most current; for that as it is seen they come the most home to men's business and bosoms."

The philosopher, lawyer, and statesman could not be trivial, meditating upon the greatest affairs and highest fortunes of men.

Times changed and the essay changed with them, the essayist becoming the satirist of society, as in the sparkling brilliancy and grand manners of Steele and Addison. Here we see the fashionable world of beaux and belles, of "lace ruffles, and card-tables and sedan-chairs, and coffee-houses." Here the writer deals with social foibles, foppish airs, and gentlemanly badinage, essentially the spirit and gossip of the town.

The field broadened for Lamb, Hazlitt, and Hunt; they had a larger audience, made up of both town and country, and a thousand added topics. Lamb laughed to keep from weeping, a sweet and gentle soul, his sister's guardian angel and a life-long martyr to a sacred duty. The shadow of a great grief hung over all his days like the relentless destiny of a Greek tragedy. Leigh Hunt was jaunty and poetic, full of pretty fancies. With quieter days came Lord Macaulay and Carlyle. The latter stands perhaps at the head of the critical and biographical essayists, while Lord Macaulay is first among the writers of the historical essay. He excelled in the pictorial and descriptive, with an inexhaustible vocabulary and a flowing style.

In the essay we seem to get a glimpse of the inner man. We seem to see gruff, scholarly Johnson, with Boswell dogging his steps, and faithfully worshipping at his shrine. What an audience Johnson always had when the great biographer was present? One can almost fancy he can see Boswell as he listens and admires. And witty, Bohemian Goldsmith, wandering up and down in careless fashion, piping for his supper. His element was ink, for when he talked he babbled. Yet he holds the stage to-day. And shrinking Cowper, playing with his hares, morbid and timorous, fearful of the great rough outside world at large. Modern therapeutic methods would perhaps have kept him mentally vigorous and added years to his blameless life. We can see Burke in his study, rounding stately periods, polishing and elaborating, careful of his style. We walk with Cole-

ridge, mystical and dreaming, planning and neglecting, with the taint of the Orient-drug poisoning his life, and we leave him with a sense that he might have done so much more. We hear Landor talking of the ancient worthies who have come back to life again in his pages. We can imagine him saying: "Now, don't you suppose Shakespeare would have said that?" And so down through the years we go, noting the ethereal delicacy and altruistic, visionary yearnings of Shelley, the buoyant wit of Jerrold and the kindly satire of Thackeray, the breeziness of Dickens, and the art-morality of Ruskin, the splendor of Spencer's philosophy and the culture-alembic of Matthew Arnold. If we read the essay we see the man, "in his habit as he lived."

CONTENTS

	PAGE
FRANCIS BACON	1
Of Seeming Wise	3
Of Studies	5
Of Truth	7
Of Revenge	11
Of Envy	13
Of Love	19
Of Friendship	21
Of Youth and Age	29
ROBERT BURTON	31
Perturbation of the Mind Rectified	33
SIR THOMAS BROWNE	41
Of Toleration	43
Of Providence	45
THOMAS FULLER	49
Of Jesting	51
Of Self-Praising	53
Of Company	55
JOHN MILTON	59
On Education	61
ABRAHAM COWLEY	75
Of Greatness	77
Of Myself	85
SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE	91
Against Excessive Grief	93
JOHN DRYDEN	103
Of Heroic Plays	105
JOHN LOCKE	115
Of Practice and Habits	117
Of Principles	119
Of Prejudices	125
Of Observation	127
Of Reading	129
Some Thoughts Concerning Education	131

PAGE

DANIEL DEFOE 137
The Instability of Human Glory 139
Description of a Quack Doctor 143
JONATHAN SWIFT 149
On Style 151
The Vindication of Isaac Bickerstaff 157
ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, EARL OF SHAFTESBURY 163
The Deity Unfolded in His Works 165
SIR RICHARD STEELE 169
A Scene of Domestic Felicity 171
A Death-Bed Scene 177
The Trumpet Club 181
On the Death of Friends 185
The Spectator Club 189
The Ugly Club 195
Sir Roger and the Widow 199
JOSEPH ADDISON 205
The Character of Ned Softly 207
Nicolini and the Lions 211
Fans 215
Sir Roger at the Assizes 219
The Vision of Mirza 223
The Art of Grinning 229
Sir Roger at the Abbey 233
Sir Roger at the Play 237
The Tory Fox-Hunter 241
ALEXANDER POPE 247
On Dedications 249
On Epic Poetry 255
PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE, EARL OF CHESTERFIELD 261
On Passion 263
HENRY FIELDING 269
The Commonwealth of Letters 271
SAMUEL JOHNSON 277
The Advantages of Living in a Garret 279
Literary Courage 285
DAVID HUME 289
Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion 291
Of Simplicity and Refinement in Writing 295
WILLIAM SHENSTONE 301
A Humorist 303
On Reserve 307
An Opinion of Ghosts 311
On Writing and Books 315

PAGE

THOMAS GRAY 319
On Norman Architecture 321
On the Philosophy of Lord Bolingbroke 327
HORACE WALPOLE, EARL OF ORFORD 331
Change of Style 333
OLIVER GOLDSMITH 339
National Prejudice 341
The Man in Black 345
A Club of Authors 349
Beau Tibbs 355
A City Night-Piece 361
EDMUND BURKE 363
On Taste 365
WILLIAM COWPER 375
On Conversation 377
GEORGE COLMAN AND BONNELL THORNTON 381
The Ocean of Ink 383
HENRY MACKENZIE 389
Extraordinary Account of Robert Burns, the Ayrshire Ploughman 391
SYDNEY SMITH 399
Fallacies of Anti-Reformers 401
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE 429
On Poesy or Art 431
FRANCIS JEFFREY 441
Waverley, or 'Tis Sixty Years Since 443

OF SEEMING WISE

—

OF STUDIES

—

OF TRUTH

—

OF REVENGE

—

OF ENVY

—

OF LOVE

—

OF FRIENDSHIP

—

OF YOUTH AND AGE

—

BY

FRANCIS BACON

Lord Verulam

FRANCIS BACON, LORD VERULAM

1561—1626

The advent of Francis Bacon marks the beginning of the essay as a literary force in England. To him the English essay owes, if not inception, at least the first masterly exhibition of its strength. Born in 1561, of aristocratic parents, he lived in the age of Shakespeare, Jonson, Spenser, and Raleigh, and was brilliantly educated in the learning of that day. His legal acumen was remarkable. From a solicitor-generalship in 1607 he rose, step by step, to the summit of his profession, being made Lord High Chancellor in 1618, with the title of Baron Verulam. After three years in office he was charged with bribery and corruption. He pleaded guilty to having received presents from litigants in his courts, though it may be said in extenuation of his conduct that such was the common practice of the judges of his time. He was sentenced to pay a fine and to lie in the Tower during the pleasure of the King. King James was magnanimous enough to remit the sentence, and Bacon retired to his country home, where he died in 1626.

Bacon's position as an essayist is peculiar. He cannot be compared with Addison or Hazlitt; for he has no resemblance to them. He was in the habit of jotting down his ideas in a *Promus* or commonplace book; and occasionally brought two or three thoughts on the same subject together and followed them out or added others which suggested themselves. By and by he published them under various headings—"Virtue," "Fame," "Empire," and the like. This was the origin of the "Essays." He illustrates them by many quotations from his favorite authors and some images of his own. He is no mere maximist like La Rochefoucauld; for each is a connected whole, though sometimes the thread of connection is slight. They are miracles of conciseness; there is not a superfluous word. But this very brevity admirably suits the matter. Bacon cuts deep into the nature of man and lays bare his inmost heart. Some were evidently written from his court experience. Others, like "Of Truth," breathe the spirit of a noble and high-minded philosopher who had seen through the vain shows of the world.

If Bacon resembles any writer it is Montaigne. There is the same old-time flavor about both, the same habit of moralizing on human life. But the Frenchman is the lighter character; he is gossipy and, occasionally, provincial. Bacon is always grave, and his writings, excepting the language, have nothing distinctively English about them. He writes as the philosopher in his study, not as the observer of everyday life in field and street. It is abstract truth he gives us, but relieved from all aridness by illustration and quotation. They both drew from the same sources; they were both keen noticers of human character; but they presented the fruits of their study in different ways. Montaigne's essays smell of the Gascon fields; the Frenchman comes through on every page. Bacon poured the ore of his brain into a refining furnace and drew off from it all "turbid mixture of contemporaneousness." Hence his work will have charms for men of every age and every nation.

The essays are rough sketches to be filled up at will. They suggest rather than satisfy. Many since the author's day have thought it advisable to tag on to them their own reflections, some good, some indifferent, but all very far below the "brave original." He has left us not a book for the hour, but a book for all time. One can revert to it again and again and each time find rich treasure. It is a mine of quaint conceits and wise saws, a very orchard of the apples of wisdom.

OF SEEMING WISE

IT hath been an opinion, that the French are wiser than they seem, and the Spaniards seem wiser than they are; but howsoever it be between nations, certainly it is so between man and man. For, as the Apostle saith of godliness, "having a show of godliness, but denying the power thereof," so certainly there are, in points of wisdom and sufficiency,[1] that do nothing or little very solemnly—"*Magno conatu nugas.*"[2] It is a ridiculous thing and fit for a satire to persons of judgment, to see what shifts these formalists[3] have, and what prospectives to make superficies to seem body that hath depth and bulk. Some are so close and reserved, as they will not show their wares but by a dark light, and seem always to keep back somewhat: and when they know within themselves they speak of that they do not well know, would nevertheless seem to others to know of that which they may not well speak. Some help themselves with countenance and gesture, and are wise by signs; as Cicero saith of Piso, that when he answered him he fetched one of his brows up to his forehead, and bent the other down to his chin—"*Respondes, altero ad frontem sublato, altero ad mentum depresso supercilio, crudelitatem tibi non placere.*" Some think to bear it by speaking a great word, and being peremptory; and go on, and take by admittance that which they cannot make good. Some, whatsoever is beyond their reach, will seem to despise or make light of it, as impertinent or curious,[4] and so would have their ignorance seem judgment. Some are never without a difference, and commonly by amusing men with a subtilty, blanch[5] the matter; of whom A. Gellius saith: "*Hominem delirum, qui verborum minutiis rerum frangit pondera.*"[6] Of which kind also Plato, in his

[1] Ability.
[2] Terence, "Heaut." iv. 1. 8.
[3] *i.e.* The seeming wise.
[4] Irrelevant or trifling.
[5] Evade.
[6] The quotation is not from Gellius, but from Quintilian "on Seneca," iv. 1. (Whately).

"Protagoras," bringeth in Prodicus in scorn and maketh him make a speech that consisteth of distinctions from the beginning to the end. Generally, such men in all deliberations find ease to be of the negative side, and affect a credit to object and foretell difficulties: for when propositions are denied there is an end of them; but if they be allowed, it requireth a new work: which false point of wisdom is the bane of business. To conclude, there is no decaying merchant or inward beggar [7] hath so many tricks to uphold the credit of their wealth as these empty persons have to maintain the credit of their sufficiency. Seeming wise men may make shift to get opinion: but let no man choose them for employment; for certainly you were better take for business a man somewhat absurd [8] than over-formal.[9]

[7] One secretly a bankrupt (Whately). [8] Defective in judgment.
[9] Too pretentious.

OF STUDIES

STUDIES serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules is the humor of a scholar. They perfect nature and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study: and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies; simple men admire them; and wise men use them: for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested: that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously;[1] and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others: but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books: else distilled books are, like common distilled waters, flashy[2] things. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and

[1] Attentively.

[2] Bacon uses the word in the sense of "tasteless." In his "Natural History" he remarks that the most offensive tastes are "bitter, sour, harsh, waterish, or flashy."

if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets witty; the mathematics subtle; natural philosophy deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric able to contend: *Abeunt studia in mores.* Nay, there is no stond [3] or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies: like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins; shooting for the lungs and breast; a gentle walking for the stomach; riding for the head; and the like. So, if a man's wits be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again: if his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the school-men; for they are *Cymini sectores.*[4] If he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyer's cases: so every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

[3] Obstacle.

[4] Hair-splitters; lit. "dividers of cumin-seed, which is one of the least seeds" (Bacon).

OF TRUTH

WHAT is truth? said jesting Pilate; and would not stay for an answer. Certainly there be that delight in giddiness; and count it a bondage to fix a belief; affecting free-will in thinking, as well as in acting. And though the sect of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing wits, which are of the same veins, though there be not so much blood in them as was in those of the ancients. But it is not only the difficulty and labor which men take in finding out of truth; nor again, that when it is found, it imposeth upon men's thoughts; that doth bring lyes in favor: but a natural though corrupt love of the lye itself. One of the later school of the Grecians [1] examineth the matter, and is at a stand to think what should be in it, that men should love lyes; where neither they make for pleasure, as with poets; nor for advantage, as with the merchant; but for the lye's sake. But I cannot tell: this same truth is a naked and open daylight, that doth not show the masks, and mummeries, and triumphs of the world, half so stately and daintily as candle-lights. Truth may perhaps come to the price of a pearl, that showeth best by day; but it will not rise to the price of a diamond or carbuncle, that showeth best in varied lights. A mixture of a lye doth ever add pleasure. Doth any man doubt, that if there were taken out of men's minds, vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like; but it would leave the minds of a number of men, poor shrunken things; full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves? One of the fathers, in great severity, called poesy, *vinum dæmonum*;[2] because it filleth the imagination, and yet it is but with the shadow of a lye. But it is not the lye that passeth through the mind, but the lye that sinketh in, and settleth in it, that doth the hurt, such as we spake of before.

[1] Lucian in the "Philopseudes."

[2] "Wine of devils."—*Augustine.*

But howsoever these things are thus in men's depraved judgments and affections, yet truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth, that the inquiry of truth, which is the love-making, or wooing of it; the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it; and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it; is the sovereign good of human nature. The first creature of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the sense; the last was the light of reason; and his Sabbath work ever since is the illumination of his Spirit. First he breathed light upon the face of the matter, or chaos; then he breathed light into the face of man; and still he breatheth and inspireth light into the face of his chosen. The poet [3] that beautified the sect, that was otherwise inferior to the rest, saith yet excellently well: "It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore and to see ships tost upon the sea; a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle, and the adventures thereof, below; but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of truth, a hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene: and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below:" so always, that this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling or pride. Certainly, it is heaven upon earth to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.

To pass from theological and philosophical truth, to the truth of civil business; it will be acknowledged, even by those that practise it not, that clear and round dealing is the honor of man's nature; and that mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold and silver: which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth it. For these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the serpent; which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet. There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame, as to be found false and perfidious. And therefore Montaigne saith prettily, when he inquired the reason, why the word of the lye should be such a disgrace, and such an odious charge? Saith he, "If it be well weighed, to say that a man lyeth, is as much as to say, that he is brave towards God, and a coward towards men. For a lye faces God, and shrinks from man." Surely the wicked-

[3] Lucretius. The sect referred to is the Epicurean.

ness of falsehood, and breach of faith, cannot possibly be so highly expressed, as in that it shall be the last peal to call the judgments of God upon the generations of men: it being foretold, that when Christ cometh "he shall not find faith upon the earth."

OF REVENGE

REVENGE is a kind of wild justice, which the more a man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out. For as for the first wrong, it doth but offend the law; but the revenge of that wrong putteth the law out of office. Certainly in taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy; but in passing it over, he is superior: for it is a prince's part to pardon. And Solomon, I am sure, saith, "It is the glory of a man to pass by an offence." That which is past is gone and irrevocable, and wise men have enough to do with things present and to come: therefore they do but trifle with themselves that labor in past matters. There is no man doth a wrong for the wrong's sake; but thereby to purchase himself profit, or pleasure, or honor, or the like. Therefore why should I be angry with a man for loving himself better than me? And if any man should do wrong, merely out of ill-nature, why, yet it is but like the thorn or brier, which prick or scratch, because they can do no other. The most tolerable sort of revenge is for those wrongs which there is no law to remedy: but then let a man take heed the revenge be such as there is no law to punish; else a man's enemy is still beforehand, and it is two for one. Some, when they take revenge, are desirous the party should know whence it cometh: this is the more generous. For the delight seemeth to be not so much in doing the hurt, as in making the party repent: but base and crafty cowards are like the arrow that flieth in the dark. Cosmus, Duke of Florence, had a desperate saying against perfidious or neglecting friends, as if those wrongs were unpardonable. "You shall read," saith he, "that we are commanded to forgive our enemies; but you never read, that we are commanded to forgive our friends." But yet the spirit of Job was in a better tune; "Shall we," saith he, "take good at God's hands, and not be content to take evil also?" And so of

friends in a proportion. This is certain, that a man that studieth revenge, keeps his own wounds green, which otherwise would heal and do well. Public revenges are for the most part fortunate: as that for the death of Cæsar; for the death of Pertinax; for the death of Henry III of France; and many more: but in private revenges it is not so; nay, rather, vindictive persons live the life of witches; who as they are mischievous, so end they unfortunate.

OF ENVY

THERE be none of the affections which have been noted to fascinate or bewitch, but love and envy. They both have vehement wishes; they frame themselves readily into imaginations and suggestions: and they come easily into the eye; especially upon the presence of the objects; which are the points that conduce to fascination, if any such thing there be. We see likewise, the scripture calleth envy an evil eye: and the astrologers call the evil influences of the stars evil aspects; so that still there seemeth to be acknowledged in the act of envy, an ejaculation, or irradiation of the eye. Nay, some have been so curious, as to note that the times when the stroke or percussion of an envious eye doth most hurt, are when the party envied is beheld in glory or triumph; for that sets an edge upon envy: and, besides, at such times, the spirits of the person envied do come forth most into the outward parts, and so meet the blow.

But leaving these curiosities, though not unworthy to be thought on in fit place, we will handle: what persons are apt to envy others; what persons are most subject to be envied themselves; and what is the difference between public and private envy.

A man that hath no virtue in himself, ever envieth virtue in others. For men's minds will either feed upon their own good, or upon others' evil; and who wanteth the one, will prey upon the other: and whoso is out of hope to attain to another's virtue, will seek to come at even hand by depressing another's fortune.

A man that is busy and inquisitive is commonly envious: for to know much of other men's matters cannot be, because all that ado may concern his own estate: therefore it must needs be, that he taketh a kind of play-pleasure in looking upon the fortunes of others; neither can he that mindeth but

his own business find much matter for envy. For envy is a gadding passion, and walketh the streets, and doth not keep home; "*Non est curiosus, quin idem sit malevolus.*" [1]

Men of noble birth are noted to be envious towards new men when they rise: for the distance is altered: and it is like a deceit of the eye, that when others come on, they think themselves go back.

Deformed persons and eunuchs, and old men and bastards, are envious: for he that cannot possibly mend his own case, will do what he can to impair another's; except these defects light upon a very brave and heroical nature, which thinketh to make his natural wants part of his honor; in that it should be said, that a eunuch or a lame man did such great matters; affecting the honor of a miracle; as it was in Narses the eunuch, and Agesilaus and Tamerlane, that were lame men.

The same is the case of men that rise after calamities and misfortunes; for they are as men fallen out of the times; and think other men's harm a redemption of their own sufferings.

They that desire to excel in too many matters, out of levity and vainglory, are ever envious, for they cannot want work; it being impossible but many, in some one of those things, should surpass them. Which was the character of Adrian the emperor, that mortally envied poets, and painters, and artificers, in works wherein he had a vein to excel.

Lastly, near kinsfolks, and fellows in office, and those that have been bred together, are more apt to envy their equals when they are raised. For it doth upbraid unto them their own fortunes, and pointeth at them, and cometh oftener in their remembrance, and incurreth likewise more into the note of others; and envy ever redoubleth from speech and fame. Cain's envy was the more vile and malignant towards his brother Abel, because, when his sacrifice was better accepted, there was nobody to look on. Thus much for those that are apt to envy.

Concerning those that are more or less subject to envy: First, persons of eminent virtue, when they are advanced, are less envied. For their fortune seemeth but due unto them; and no man envieth the payment of a debt, but rewards, and

[1] "There is no man inquisitive who is not also malevolent."—*Plautus*, "Stich." i. sec. 55.

liberality rather. Again envy is ever joined with the comparing of a man's self; and where there is no comparison, no envy; and therefore kings are not envied but by kings. Nevertheless it is to be noted, that unworthy persons are most envied at their first coming in, and afterwards overcome it better; whereas contrariwise, persons of worth and merit are most envied when their fortune continueth long. For by that time, though their virtue be the same, yet it hath not the same lustre; for fresh men grow up that darken it.

Persons of noble blood are less envied in their rising; for it seemeth but right done to their birth: besides, there seemeth not much added to their fortune: and envy is as the sun-beams, that beat hotter upon a bank or steep rising ground than upon a flat. And for the same reason, those that are advanced by degrees, are less envied than those that are advanced suddenly, and *per saltum*.

Those that have joined with their honor, great travels, cares, or perils, are less subject to envy: for men think that they earn their honors hardly, and pity them sometimes; and pity ever healeth envy: wherefore you shall observe, that the more deep and sober sort of politic persons, in their greatness, are ever bemoaning themselves what a life they lead, chanting a "*Quanta patimur*": not that they feel it so, but only to abate the edge of envy. But this is to be understood of business that is laid upon men, and not such as they call unto themselves: for nothing increaseth envy more, than an unnecessary and ambitious engrossing of business: and nothing doth extinguish envy more, than for a great person to preserve all other inferior officers in their full rights and pre-eminence of their places: for by that means there be so many screens between him and envy.

Above all, those are most subject to envy, which carry the greatness of their fortunes in an insolent and proud manner: being never well but while they are showing how great they are, either by outward pomp, or by triumphing over all opposition or competition; whereas wise men will rather do sacrifice to envy, in suffering themselves sometimes of purpose to be crossed and overborne in things that do not much concern them. Notwithstanding, so much is true: that the carriage of greatness in a plain and open manner, so it be without arro-

gancy and vainglory, doth draw less envy, than if it be in a more crafty and cunning fashion. For in that course a man doth but disavow fortune, and seemeth to be conscious of his own want in worth, and doth but teach others to envy him.

Lastly, to conclude this part; as we said in the beginning, that the act of envy had somewhat in it of witchcraft, so there is no other cure of envy, but the cure of witchcraft: and that is, to remove the lot, as they call it, and to lay it upon another. For which purpose, the wiser sort of great persons bring in ever upon the stage somebody upon whom to derive the envy that would come upon themselves: sometimes upon ministers and servants, sometimes upon colleagues and associates, and the like: and for that turn, there are never wanting some persons of violent and undertaking natures, who, so they may have power and business, will take it at any cost.

Now to speak of public envy. There is yet some good in public envy, whereas in private there is none. For public envy is as an ostracism, that eclipseth men when they grow too great: and therefore it is a bridle also to great ones, to keep them within bounds.

This envy, being in the Latin word *invidia*, goeth in the modern languages by the name of "discontent"; of which we shall speak in handling "sedition." It is a disease in a state like to infection: for as infection spreadeth upon that which is sound, and tainteth it; so when envy is gotten once into a state, it traduceth even the best actions thereof, and turneth them into an ill-odor; and therefore there is little won by intermingling of plausible actions: for that doth argue but a weakness and fear of envy, which hurteth so much the more; as it is likewise usual in infections, which if you fear them, you call them upon you.

This public envy seemeth to beat chiefly upon principal officers or ministers, rather than upon kings and estates themselves. But this is a sure rule, that if the envy upon the minister be great, when the cause of it in him is small; or if the envy be general in a manner upon all the ministers of an estate, then the envy, though hidden, is truly upon the estate itself. And so much of public envy or discontentment, and the difference thereof from private envy, which was handled in the first place.

We will add this in general touching the affection of envy: that of all other affections it is the most importune and continual: for of other affections there is occasion given but now and then; and therefore it is well said, "*Invidia festos dies non agit*": [2] for it is ever working upon some other. And it is also noted, that love and envy to make a man pine, which other affections do not, because they are not so continual.

It is also the vilest affection, and the most depraved; for which cause it is the proper attribute of the devil, who is called "the envious man, that soweth tares among the wheat by night": as it always cometh to pass, that envy worketh subtilely, and in the dark; and to the prejudice of good things, such as is the wheat.

[2] "Envy keeps no holidays."

OF LOVE

THE stage is more beholden to love, than the life of man. For as to the stage, love is ever a matter of comedies, and now and then of tragedies; but in life it doth much mischief, sometimes like a siren, sometimes like a fury. You may observe, that amongst all the great and worthy persons, whereof the memory remaineth, either ancient or recent, there is not one that hath been transported to the mad degree of love; which shows, that great spirits and great business do keep out this weak passion. You must except, nevertheless, Marcus Antonius the half partner of the Empire of Rome, and Appius Claudius the Decemvir and lawgiver; whereof the former was indeed a voluptuous man and inordinate; but the latter was an austere and wise man: and therefore it seems, though rarely, that love can find entrance, not only into an open heart, but also into a heart well fortified, if watch be not well kept. It is a poor saying of Epicurus: "*Satis magnum alter alteri theatrum sumus;*" [1] as if man, made for the contemplation of heaven, and all noble objects, should do nothing but kneel before a little idol, and make himself subject, though not of the mouth, as beasts are, yet of the eye, which was given him for higher purposes. It is a strange thing to note the excess of this passion; and how it braves the nature and value of things by this, that the speaking in a perpetual hyperbole is comely in nothing but in love. Neither is it merely in the phrase; for whereas it hath been well said, that the arch-flatterer, with whom all the petty flatterers have intelligence, is a man's self; certainly the lover is more. For there was never proud man thought so absurdly well of himself as the lover doth of the person loved; and therefore it was well said, that it is impossible to love, and to be wise. Neither doth this weakness appear to others only, and not to

[1] "We are a sufficiently great spectacle to one another."—*Seneca*, "Ep." *l.* 7, sec. 11.

the party loved, but to the loved most of all; except the love be *réciproque*. For it is a true rule, that love is ever rewarded either with the *réciproque*, or with an inward and secret contempt: by how much the more men ought to beware of this passion, which loseth not only other things but itself. As for the other losses, the poet's relation doth well figure them; that he that preferred Helena quitted the gifts of Juno and Pallas: for whosoever esteemeth too much of amorous affection quitteth both riches and wisdom. This passion hath its floods in the very times of weakness, which are great prosperity, and great adversity; though this latter hath been less observed: which both times kindle love, and make it more fervent, and therefore show it to be the child of folly. They do best who, if they cannot but admit love, yet make it keep quarter; and sever it wholly from their serious affairs and actions of life: for if it check once with business, it troubleth men's fortunes, and maketh men that they can no ways be true to their own ends. I know not how, but martial men are given to love: I think it is, but as they are given to wine; for perils commonly ask to be paid in pleasures. There is in man's nature a secret inclination and motion towards love of others, which, if it be not spent upon some one or a few, doth naturally spread itself towards many, and maketh men to become humane and charitable; as it is seen sometimes in friars. Nuptial love maketh mankind; friendly love perfecteth it; but wanton love corrupteth and embaseth it.

OF FRIENDSHIP

IT had been hard for him that spake it to have put more truth and untruth together, in few words, than in that speech: "Whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a god."[1] For it is most true, that a natural and secret hatred, and aversation towards society, in any man, hath somewhat of the savage beast: but it is most untrue, that it should have any character at all of the divine nature, except it proceed, not out of a pleasure in solitude, but out of a love and desire to sequester a man's self for a higher conversation; such as is found to have been falsely and feignedly in some of the heathen; as Epimenides the Candian, Numa the Roman, Empedocles the Sicilian, and Apollonius of Tyana; and truly and really in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the Church. But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth. For a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures; and talk but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no love. The Latin adage meeteth with it a little, "*Magna civitas, magna solitudo*";[2] because in a great town friends are scattered, so that there is not that fellowship, for the most part, which is in less neighborhoods. But we may go further, and affirm most truly, that it is a mere and miserable solitude, to want true friends, without which the world is but a wilderness. And even in this sense also of solitude, whosoever in the frame of his nature and affections is unfit for friendship, he taketh it of the beast, and not from humanity.

A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fulness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all kinds do cause and induce. We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous in the body; and it is not much otherwise in the mind; you may take sarza to

[1] *Aristotle*, "Politics," i. 1.
[2] "A great city, a great solitude"—a sentence of a comic poet quoted by Strabo, xvi.

open the liver, steel to open the spleen, flour of sulphur for the lungs, castoreum for the brain; but no receipt openeth the heart but a true friend, to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart, to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession.

It is a strange thing to observe how high a rate great kings and monarchs do set upon this fruit of friendship, whereof we speak; so great, as they purchase it many times at the hazard of their own safety and greatness. For princes, in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants, cannot gather this fruit, except, to make themselves capable thereof, they raise some persons to be, as it were, companions, and almost equals to themselves, which many times sorteth to inconvenience. The modern languages give unto such persons the name of favorites or *privadoes*, as if it were matter of grace or conversation; but the Roman name attaineth the true use and cause thereof, naming them "*participes curarum*";[3] for it is that which tieth the knot. And we see plainly, that this hath been done, not by weak and passionate princes only, but by the wisest and most politic that ever reigned, who have oftentimes joined to themselves some of their servants, whom both themselves have called friends, and allowed others likewise to call them in the same manner, using the word which is received between private men.

L. Sylla, when he commanded Rome, raised Pompey, after surnamed the Great, to that height, that Pompey vaunted himself for Sylla's over-match. For when he had carried the consulship for a friend of his against the pursuit of Sylla, and that Sylla did a little resent thereat, and began to speak great, Pompey turned upon him again, and in effect bade him be quiet: for that more men adored the sun rising, than the sun setting. With Julius Cæsar, Decimus Brutus had obtained that interest, as he set him down in his testament for heir in remainder after his nephew. And this was the man that had power with him to draw him forth to his death. For when Cæsar would have discharged the Senate, in regard of some ill-presages, and especially a dream of Calpurnia, this man lifted him gently by the arm out of his chair, telling him, he hoped he would not dismiss the Senate till his wife had dreamed a

[3] Tiberius called Sejanus "*socium laborum.*"—*Tacitus*, "Annales," iv. 2.

better dream. And it seemeth, his favor was so great, as Antonius, in a letter which is recited verbatim in one of Cicero's Philippics,[4] calleth him "*venefica*," witch; as if he had enchanted Cæsar. Augustus raised Agrippa, though of mean birth, to that height, as when he consulted with Mæcenas about the marriage of his daughter Julia, Mæcenas took the liberty to tell him, that he must either marry his daughter to Agrippa, or take away his life; there was no third way, he had made him so great. With Tiberius Cæsar Sejanus had ascended to that height, as they two were termed and reckoned as a pair of friends. Tiberius in a letter to him saith, "*Hæc pro amicitia nostra non occultavi*":[5] and the whole Senate dedicated an altar to friendship as to a goddess, in respect of the great dearness of friendship between them two. The like or more was between Septimus Severus and Plantianus. For he forced his eldest son to marry the daughter of Plantianus, and would often maintain Plantianus in doing affronts to his son: and did write also in a letter to the Senate, by these words: "I love the man so well, as I wish he may overlive me."[6] Now if these princes had been as a Trajan, or a Marcus Aurelius, a man might have thought that this had proceeded of an abundant goodness of nature; but being men so wise, of such strength and severity of mind, and so extreme lovers of themselves, as all these were, it proveth most plainly, that they found their own felicity, though as great as ever happened to mortal men, but as a half-piece, except they might have a friend to make it entire; and yet, which is more, they were princes which had wives, sons, nephews; and yet all these could not supply the comfort of friendship.

It is not to be forgotten what Comminius observeth of his first master Duke Charles the Hardy, namely, that he would communicate his secrets with none; and least of all those secrets which troubled him most. Whereupon he goeth on, and saith, that towards his latter time, that closeness did impair, and a little perish, his understanding.[7] Surely Comminius might have made the same judgment also, if it had pleased him, of his second master Louis XI, whose closeness was in-

[4] *Cicero*, "Philippics," xiii. 11.
[5] "These things on account of our friendship I have not concealed."—*Tacitus*, "Annales," iv. 40.
[6] Dion Cassius, lxxv. 15.
[7] "History of Philip de Commines," v. 5.

deed his tormentor. The parable of Pythagoras is dark, but true, "*Cor ne edito*"[8]—"Eat not the heart." Certainly, if a man would give it a hard phrase, those that want friends to open themselves unto, are cannibals of their own hearts. But one thing is most admirable, wherewith I will conclude this first fruit of friendship, which is, that this communicating of a man's self to his friend works two contrary effects; for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves. For there is no man that imparteth his joys to his friends, but he joyeth the more; and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less. So that it is in truth of operation upon a man's mind of like virtue, as the alchemists used to attribute to their stone, for man's body; that it worketh all contrary effects, but still to the good and benefit of nature. But yet, without praying in aid of alchemists, there is a manifest image of this in the ordinary course of nature. For in bodies, union strengtheneth and cherisheth any natural action; and, on the other side, weakeneth and dulleth any violent impression; and even so it is of minds.

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections. For friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections, from storm and tempests; but it maketh daylight in the understanding, out of darkness and confusion of thoughts: neither is this to be understood only of faithful counsel, which a man receiveth from his friend; but before you come to that, certain it is, that whosoever hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up in the communicating and discoursing with another: he tosseth his thoughts more easily; he marshalleth them more orderly; he seeth how they look when they are turned into words; finally, he waxeth wiser than himself; and that more by an hour's discourse, than by a day's meditations. It was well said by Themistocles to the King of Persia, that speech was like cloth of Arras, opened and put abroad, whereby the imagery doth appear in figure; whereas in thoughts they lie but as in packs.[9] Neither is this second fruit of friendship, in opening the understanding, restrained only to such friends as are able to give a man counsel: they indeed are best: but even, without that,

[8] Plutarch, "De Educat. Puer." 17.

[9] Plutarch, "Vit. Themist." 28.

a man learneth of himself and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not. In a word, a man were better relate himself to a statue or picture, than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother.

Add now, to make this second fruit of friendship complete, that other point which lieth more open, and falleth within vulgar observation; which is faithful counsel from a friend. Heraclitus saith well in one of his enigmas, "Dry light is ever the best."[1] And certain it is, that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from another is drier and purer, than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment; which is ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. So as there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer. For there is no such flatterer as is a man's self; and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self, as the liberty of a friend. Counsel is of two sorts; the one concerning manners, the other concerning business. For the first, the best preservative to keep the mind in health is the faithful admonition of a friend. The calling a man's self to a strict account is a medicine sometimes too piercing and corrosive. Reading good books of morality is a little flat and dead. Observing our faults in others is sometimes improper for our case: but the best receipt, best, I say, to work, and best to take, is the admonition of a friend. It is a strange thing to behold what gross errors and extreme absurdities many, especially of the greater sort, do commit for want of a friend to tell them of them, to the great damage both of their fame and fortune. For as St. James saith, they are as men "that look sometimes into a glass, and presently forget their own shape and favor." As for business, a man may think if he will, that two eyes see no more than one; or that a gamester seeth always more than a looker-on; or that a man in anger is as wise as he that hath said over the four-and-twenty letters; or that a musket may be shot off as well upon the arm as upon a rest; and such other fond and high imaginations, to think himself all in all. But when all is done, the help of good counsel is that which setteth business straight. And if any man think that he will take counsel, but

[1] A saying quoted by Galen.

it shall be by pieces; asking counsel in one business of one man, and in another business of another man; it is well, that is to say, better perhaps than if he asked none at all, but he runneth two dangers: one, that he shall not be faithfully counselled; for it is a rare thing, except it be from a perfect and entire friend, to have counsel given, but such as shall be bowed and crooked to some ends which he hath that giveth it. The other, that he shall have counsel given, hurtful and unsafe, though with good meaning, and mixed partly of mischief, and partly of remedy: even as if you would call a physician that is thought good for the cure of the disease you complain of, but is unacquainted with your body; and therefore may put you in way for a present cure, but overthroweth your health in some other kind, and so cure the disease and kill the patient. But a friend that is wholly acquainted with a man's estate, will beware by furthering any present business how he dasheth upon other inconvenience. And therefore rest not upon scattered counsels; they will rather distract and mislead, than settle and direct.

After these two noble fruits of friendship, peace in the affections, and support of the judgment, followeth the last fruit, which is like the pomegranate, full of many kernels; I mean aid, and bearing a part in all actions and occasions. Here the best way to represent to life the manifold use of friendship, is to cast and see how many things there are which a man cannot do himself; and then it will appear that it was a sparing speech of the ancients to say, that "a friend is another himself"; for that a friend is far more than himself. Men have their time, and die many times in desire of some things which they principally take to heart; the bestowing of a child, the finishing of a work, or the like. If a man have a true friend, he may rest almost secure, that the care of those things will continue after him. So that a man hath, as it were, two lives in his desires. A man hath a body, and that body is confined to a place; but where friendship is, all offices of life are as it were granted to him and his deputy: for he may exercise them by his friend. How many things are there, which a man cannot with any face or comeliness, say or do himself? A man can scarce allege his own merits with modesty, much less extol them: a man cannot sometimes brook to supplicate or beg;

and a number of the like. But all these things are graceful in a friend's mouth, which are blushing in a man's own. So again, a man's person hath many proper relations, which he cannot put off. A man cannot speak to his son, but as a father; to his wife, but as a husband; to his enemy, but upon terms; whereas a friend may speak as the case requires, and not as it sorteth with the person. But to enumerate these things were endless; I have given a rule, where a man cannot fitly play his own part; if he have not a friend, he may quit the stage.

OF YOUTH AND AGE

A MAN that is young in years may be old in hours, if he have lost no time. But that happeneth rarely. Generally youth is like the first cogitations, not so wise as the second. For there is a youth in thoughts, as well as in ages. And yet the invention of young men is more lively than that of old; and imaginations stream into their minds better, and as it were more divinely. Natures that have much heat, and great and violent desires and perturbations, are not ripe for action, till they have passed the meridian of their years: as it was with Julius Cæsar and Septimius Severus. Of the latter of whom it is said, "*Juventutem egit erroribus, imo furoribus, plenam.*"[1] And yet he was the ablest emperor almost of all the list. But reposed natures may do well in youth: as it is seen in Augustus Cæsar, Cosmos, Duke of Florence, Gaston de Fois, and others. On the other side, heat and vivacity in age are an excellent composition for business. Young men are fitter to invent than to judge; fitter for execution than for counsel; and fitter for new projects than for settled business. For the experience of age, in things that fall within the compass of it, directeth them; but in new things abuseth them. The errors of young men are the ruin of business; but the errors of aged men amount but to this, that more might have been done, or sooner. Young men, in the conduct and management of actions, embrace more than they can hold; stir more than they can quiet; fly to the end, without consideration of the means and degrees; pursue some few principles, which they have chanced upon, absurdly; care not to innovate, which draws unknown inconveniences; use extreme remedies at first; and, that which doubleth all errors, will not acknowledge or retract them: like an unready horse, that will neither stop nor turn. Men of age object too much, consult too long, ad-

[1] "His youth was full of errors, yea, of evil passions." — *Spartian*, "Vit. Sev."

venture too little, repent too soon, and seldom drive business home to the full period; but content themselves with the mediocrity of success. Certainly it is good to compound employments of both; for that will be good for the present, because the virtues of either age may correct the defects of both: and good for succession, that young men may be learners, while men in age are actors: and lastly, good for extern accidents, because authority followeth old men, and favor and popularity youth. But for the moral part, perhaps youth will have the pre-eminence, as age hath for the politic. A certain rabbin [2] upon the text "Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams," inferreth that young men are admitted nearer to God than old, because vision is a clearer revelation than a dream. And certainly the more a man drinketh of the world, the more it intoxicateth; and age doth profit rather in the powers of understanding, than in the virtues of the will and affections. There be some have an over-early ripeness in their years, which fadeth betimes: these are first, such as have brittle wits, the edge whereof is soon turned; such as was Hermogenes the rhetorician, whose books are exceeding subtle, who afterwards waxed stupid. A second sort is of those that have some natural dispositions, which have better grace in youth than in age: such as is a fluent and luxuriant speech; which becomes youth well, but not age. So Tully saith of Hortensius, "*Idem manebat, neque idem decebat.*" [3] The third is, of such as take too high a strain at the first, and are magnanimous, more than tract of years can uphold. As was Scipio Africanus, of whom Livy saith in effect, "*Ultima primis cedebant.*" [4]

[2] Abrabanel, in his "Commentary on Joel."

[3] "He remained the same; but the same things no longer became him." —*Cicero*, "Brut." 95.

[4] "The latter end was worse than the beginning."—*Livy*, xxxviii. 53.

PERTURBATION OF THE MIND RECTIFIED

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BY

ROBERT BURTON

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1576—1640

Robert Burton was an English divine, a native of Lindley in Leicestershire. He studied at Oxford University, and became rector of Segrave. Born in 1576, he died in 1640. His claim to rank as an essayist rests on that wonderful book, the "Anatomy of Melancholy," written by way of alleviating his own melancholy. With Dr. Johnson this volume was a great favorite, so much so that he would turn earlier out of bed to read it. Two chapters, which give a fair idea of the style of the book, are given in a detached essay form. The "Anatomy of Melancholy" is in fact, though not in name, a collection of essays about everything that ever entered the author's far-ranging and richly furnished mind.

Burton was a good mathematician and classical scholar, an omnivorous reader, and a merry companion. His book, written, he says, by way of alleviation to his own melancholy, is an immense compilation of quotations on all manner of topics from an infinite variety of sources, familiar and out of the common track. It is described by Archbishop Herring as "the pleasantest, the most learned, and the most full of sterling sense." The archbishop adds that the wits of the reigns of Anne and the first George were deeply indebted to Burton; and we may venture to say that the "wits" of the succeeding reigns have been no less so.

PERTURBATION OF THE MIND RECTIFIED

WHOSOEVER he is that shall hope to cure this malady in himself or any other, must first rectify these passions and perturbations of the mind: the chiefest cure consists in them. A quiet mind is that *voluptas* or *summum bonum* of Epicurus; *non dolere, curis vacare, animo tranquillo esse*, not to grieve, but to want cares, and to have a quiet soul, is the only pleasure in the world, as Seneca truly recites his opinion, not that of eating and drinking, which injurious Aristotle maliciously puts upon him, and for which he is still mistaken, *male audit et vapulat*, slandered without a cause, and lashed by all posterity. "Fear and sorrow, therefore, are especially to be avoided, and the mind to be mitigated with mirth, constancy, good hope; vain terror, bad objects are to be removed, and all such persons in whose companies they be not well pleased." Gualter Bruel, Fernelius, *consil.* 43; Mercurialis, *consil.* 6; Piso Jacchinus, *cap.* 15, *in* 9. Rhasis, Capivaccius, Hildesheim, etc., all inculcate this as an especial means of their cure, that their "minds be quietly pacified, vain conceits diverted, if it be possible, with terrors, cares, fixed studies, cogitations, and whatsoever it is that shall any way molest or trouble the soul," because that otherwise there is no good to be done. "The body's mischiefs," as Plato proves, "proceed from the soul; and if the mind be not first satisfied, the body can never be cured." Alcibiades raves (saith Maximus Tyrius) and is sick, his furious desires carry him from Lyceus to the pleading-place, thence to the sea, so into Sicily, thence to Lacedæmon, thence to Persia, thence to Samos, then again to Athens; Critias tyrannizeth over all the city; Sardanapalus is love-sick; these men are ill-affected all, and can never be cured till their minds be otherwise qualified. Crato, therefore, in that often-cited counsel of his for a nobleman his patient, when he had sufficiently informed him in diet, air, exercise, Venus, sleep, con-

cludes with these as matters of greatest moment, *Quod reliquum est, animæ accidentia corrigantur,* from which alone proceeds melancholy; they are the fountain, the subject, the hinges whereon it turns, and must necessarily be reformed. "For anger stirs choler, heats the blood and vital spirits; sorrow on the other side refrigerates the body, and extinguisheth natural heat, overthrows appetite, hinders concoction, dries up the temperature, and perverts the understanding:" fear dissolves the spirits, infects the heart, attenuates the soul: and for these causes all passions and perturbations must, to the utmost of our power and most seriously, be removed. Ælianus Montaltus attributes so much to them, "that he holds the rectification of them alone to be sufficient to the cure of melancholy in most patients." Many are fully cured when they have seen or heard, etc., enjoy their desires, or be secured and satisfied in their minds; Galen, the common master of them all, from whose fountain they fetch water, brags, *lib.* 1, *de san. tuend.*, that he, for his part, hath cured divers of this infirmity, *solum animis ad rectum institutis,* by right settling alone of their minds.

Yea, but you will here infer that this is excellent good indeed if it could be done; but how shall it be effected, by whom, what art, what means? *hic labor, hoc opus est.* It is a natural infirmity, a most powerful adversary; all men are subject to passions, and melancholy above all others, as being distempered by their innate humors, abundance of choler adust, weakness of parts, outward occurrences; and how shall they be avoided? the wisest men, greatest philosophers of most excellent wit, reason, judgment, divine spirits, cannot moderate themselves in this behalf; such as are sound in body and mind, Stoics, heroes, Homer's gods, all are passionate, and furiously carried sometimes; and how shall we that are already crazed, *fracti animis,* sick in body, sick in mind, resist? we cannot perform it. You may advise and give good precepts, as who cannot? But how shall they be put in practice? I may not deny but our passions are violent, and tyrannize of us, yet there be means to curb them; though they be headstrong, they may be tamed, they may be qualified, if he himself or his friends will but use their honest endeavors, or make use of such ordinary helps as are commonly prescribed.

He himself (I say); from the patient himself the first and

chiefest remedy must be had; for if he be averse, peevish, waspish, give way wholly to his passions, will not seek to be helped, or be ruled by his friends, how is it possible he should be cured? But if he be willing, at least, gentle, tractable, and desire his own good, no doubt but he may *magnam morbi deponere partem*, be eased at least, if not cured. He himself must do his utmost endeavor to resist and withstand the beginnings. *Principiis obsta*, "Give not water passage, no not a little" (Ecclus. xxv. 27). If they open a little, they will make a greater breach at length. Whatsoever it is that runneth in his mind, vain conceit be it pleasing or displeasing, which so much affects or troubleth him, "by all possible means he must withstand it, expel those vain, false, frivolous imaginations, absurd conceits, feigned fears and sorrows; from which," saith Piso, "this disease primarily proceeds, and takes his first occasion or beginning, by doing something or other that shall be opposite unto them, thinking of something else, persuading by reason, or howsoever to make a sudden alteration of them." Though he have hitherto run in a full career, and precipitated himself, following his passions, giving reins to his appetite, let him now stop upon a sudden, curb himself in; and as Lemnius adviseth, "strive against with all his power, to the utmost of his endeavor, and not cherish those fond imaginations, which so covertly creep into his mind, most pleasing and amiable at first, but bitter as gall at last, and so headstrong, that by no reason, art, counsel, or persuasion, they may be shaken off." Though he be far gone, and habituated unto such fantastical imaginations, yet as Tully and Plutarch advise, let him oppose, fortify, or prepare himself against them, by premeditation, reason, or as we do by a crooked staff, bend himself another way.

> "*Tu tamen interea effugito quæ tristia mentem*
> *Solicitant, procul esse jube curasque metumque*
> *Pallentem, ultrices iras, sint omnia læta.*"

> "In the mean time expel them from my mind,
> Pale fears, sad cares, and griefs which do it grind,
> Revengeful anger, pain and discontent,
> Let all thy soul be set on merriment."

Curas tolles graves, irasci crede profanum. If it be idleness hath caused this infirmity, or that he perceive himself

given to solitariness, to walk alone, and please himself with fond imagination, let him by all means avoid it; it is a bosom enemy, it is delightful melancholy, a friend in show, but a secret devil, a sweet poison, it will in the end be his undoing; let him go presently, task or set himself a work, get some good company. If he proceed, as a gnat flies about a candle so long till at length he burn his body, so in the end he will undo himself; if it be any harsh object, ill company, let him presently go from it. If by his own default, through ill diet, bad air, want of exercise, etc., let him now begin to reform himself. "It would be a perfect remedy against all corruption, if," as Roger Bacon hath it, "we could but moderate ourselves in those six non-natural things." "If it be any disgrace, abuse, temporal loss, calumny, death of friends, imprisonment, banishment, be not troubled with it, do not fear, be not angry, grieve not at it, but with all courage sustain it" (Gordonius, *lib.* 1, *c.* 15, *de conser. vit.*). *Tu contra audentior ito.* If it be sickness, ill success, or any adversity that hath caused it, oppose an invincible courage, "fortify thyself by God's Word or otherwise," *mala bonis persuadenda,* set prosperity against adversity, as we refresh our eyes by seeing some pleasant meadow, fountain, picture, or the like; recreate thy mind by some contrary object, with some more pleasing meditation divert thy thoughts.

Yea, but thou infer again, *facile consilium damus aliis,* we can easily give counsel to others; every man, as the saying is, can tame a shrew, but he that hath her; *si hic esses, aliter sentires;* if you were in our misery, you would find it otherwise; it is not easily performed. We know this to be true; we should moderate ourselves; but we are furiously carried; we cannot make use of such precepts; we are overcome, sick, *male sani,* distempered, and habituated to these courses; we can make no resistance; you may as well bid him that is diseased, not to feel pain, as a melancholy man not to fear, not to be sad: it is within his blood, his brains, his whole temperature: it cannot be removed. But he may choose whether he will give way too far unto it; he may in some sort correct himself. A philosopher was bitten with a mad dog; and, as the nature of that disease is to abhor all waters, and liquid things, and to think still they see the picture of a dog before them, he went, for all this, *reluctante se,* to the bath, and seeing there (as he

thought) in the water the picture of a dog, with reason overcame this conceit: *quid cani cum balneo?*—what should a dog do in a bath? a mere conceit. Thou thinkest thou hearest and seest devils, black men, etc., it is not so; it is thy corrupt fantasy; settle thine imagination; thou art well. Thou thinkest thou hast a great nose, thou art sick, every man observes thee, laughs thee to scorn; persuade thyself it is no such matter: this is fear only, and vain suspicion. Thou art discontent, thou art sad and heavy, but why? upon what ground? consider of it: thou art jealous, timorous, suspicious; for what cause? examine it thoroughly; thou shalt find none at all, or such as is to be contemned, such as thou wilt surely deride, and contemn in thyself, when it is past. Rule thyself then with reason; satisfy thyself; accustom thyself; wean thyself from such fond conceits, vain fears, strong imaginations, restless thoughts. Thou mayest do it; *Est in nobis assuescere* (as Plutarch saith): we may frame ourselves as we will. As he that useth an upright shoe, may correct the obliquity or crookedness by wearing it on the other side; we may overcome passions if we will. *Quicquid sibi imperavit animus, obtinuit* (as Seneca saith) *nulli tam ferti affectus, ut non disciplina perdomentur:* whatsoever the will desires, she may command: no such cruel affections, but by discipline they may be tamed. Voluntarily thou wilt not do this or that, which thou oughtest to do, or refrain, etc., but when thou art lashed like a dull jade, thou wilt reform it; fear of a whip will make thee do or not do. Do that voluntarily then what thou canst do, and must do by compulsion; thou mayest refrain if thou wilt, and master thine affections. "As, in a city," saith Melanchthon, "they do by stubborn rebellious rogues, that will not submit themselves to political judgment, compel them by force; so must we do by our affections. If the heart will not lay aside those vicious motions, and the fantasy those fond imaginations, we have another form of government to enforce and refrain our outward members, that they be not led by our passions. If appetite will not obey, let the moving faculty overrule her; let her resist and compel her to do otherwise." In an ague, the appetite would drink; sore eyes that itch would be rubbed; but reason saith no; and therefore the moving faculty will not do it. Our fantasy would intrude a thousand fears, suspicious chimeras upon us; but we have

reason to resist; yet we let it be overborne by our appetite. "Imagination enforceth spirits, which by an admirable league of nature compel the nerves to obey, and they our several limbs:" we give too much way to our passions. And as, to him that is sick of an ague, all things are distasteful and unpleasant, *non ex cibi vitio,* saith Plutarch, not in the meat, but in our taste: so many things are offensive to us, not of themselves, but out of our corrupt judgment, jealousy, suspicion, and the like; we pull these mischiefs upon our own heads.

If then our judgment be so depraved, our reason overruled, will precipitated, that we cannot seek our own good, or moderate ourselves, as in this disease commonly it is, the best way for ease is to impart our misery to some friend, not to smother it up in our own breast; *alitur vitium crescitque, tegendo,* etc., and that which was most offensive to us, a cause of fear and grief, *quod nunc te coquit,* another hell; for *strangulat inclusus dolor, atque exæstuat intus*—grief concealed strangles the soul; but when as we shall but impart it to some discreet, trusty, loving friend, it is instantly removed by his counsel happily, wisdom, persuasion, advice, his good means, which we could not otherwise apply unto ourselves. A friend's counsel is a charm; like mandrake wine, *curas sopit;* and as a bull that is tied to a fig-tree becomes gentle on a sudden (which some, saith Plutarch, interpret of good words), so is a savage, obdurate heart mollified by fair speeches. "All adversity finds ease in complaining," as Isidore holds, "and it is a solace to relate it" *Ἀγαθὴ δε παραίφασις ἐστιν ἑταίρου.* Friends' confabulations are comfortable at all times, as fire in winter, shade in summer; *quale sopor fessis in gramine,* meat and drink to him that is hungry or athirst. Democritus's collyrium is not so sovereign to the eyes, as this is to the heart; good words are cheerful and powerful of themselves, but much more from friends, as so many props, mutually sustaining each other, like ivy and a wall, which Camerarius hath well illustrated in an emblem. *Lenit animum simplex vel sæpe narratio,* the simple narration many times easeth our distressed mind; and in the midst of greatest extremities, so divers have been relieved, by exonerating themselves to a faithful friend; he sees that which we cannot see for passion and discontent: he pacifies our minds; he will ease our pain, assuage our anger; *Quanta inde voluptas, quanta securi-*

tas, Chrysostom adds: what pleasure! what security by that means! "Nothing so available, or that so much refresheth the soul of man." Tully, as I remember, in an epistle to his dear friend Atticus, much condoles the defect of such a friend. "I live here," saith he, "in a great city, where I have a multitude of acquaintance, but not a man of all that company, with whom I dare familiarly breathe, or freely jest. Wherefore I expect thee, I desire thee, I send for thee; for there be many things which trouble and molest me, which, had I but thee in presence, I could quickly disburden myself of in a walking discourse." The like peradventure may he and he say with that old man in the comedy:

> "*Nemo est meorum amicorum hodie,*
> *Apud quem expromere occulta mea audeam;*"

and much inconvenience may both he and he suffer in the meantime by it. He or he, or whosoever then labors of this malady, by all means let him get some trusty friend, *Semper habens Pylademque aliquem, cui curet Oresten,* a Pylades, to whom freely and securely he may open himself. For, as in all other occurrences, so it is in this, *si quis in cœlum ascendisset,* etc., as he said in Tully, if a man had gone to heaven, "seen the beauty of the skies," stars errant, fixed, etc., *insuavis erit admiratio,* it will do him no pleasure, except he have somebody to impart to what he hath seen. It is the best thing in the world, as Seneca therefore adviseth in such a case, "to get a trusty friend, to whom we may freely and sincerely pour out our secrets. Nothing so delighteth and easeth the mind, as when we have a prepared bosom, to which our secrets may descend, of whose conscience we are assured as our own, whose speech may ease our succorless estate, counsel relieve, mirth expel our mourning, and whose very sight may be acceptable unto us." It was the counsel which that politic Commines gave to all princes, and others distressed in mind, by occasion of Charles, Duke of Burgundy, that was much perplexed, "first to pray to God, and lay himself open to Him, and then to some special friend, whom we hold most dear, to tell all our grievances to him. Nothing so forcible to strengthen, recreate, and heal the wounded soul of a miserable man."

OF TOLERATION

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OF PROVIDENCE

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BY

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

1605—1682

Thomas Browne was born in St. Michael's, Cheapside, in the year 1605. He was sent to Winchester School, and studied and graduated in arts at Oxford. Afterwards he practised medicine in the counties surrounding the university. He travelled in Ireland, France, and Italy, and returning through Holland, took the degree of Doctor of Medicine at Leyden. In 1636 he settled in Norwich, where he lived for forty-six years practising his profession extensively. In 1637 he was incorporated M.D. at Oxford. He was married in 1641; his wife survived him. In 1664 he was chosen an Honorary Fellow of the College of Physicians, and received the honor of knighthood from Charles II on the occasion of his paying a visit to the city of Norwich in 1671. He died at Norwich in 1682 at the mature age of seventy-seven.

His writings are numerous, and generally desultory. The most remarkable and the best known are a work on the religion of a physician, "Religio Medici," and a treatise on vulgar or common errors, "Pseudodoxia Epidemica." The "Religio Medici" was written shortly after his return from travel, and during a residence of two or three years at Halifax, and was published soon after he went to reside at Norwich. The work excited immediate attention by the liberality of sentiment and the freedom from prejudice which marked it, as well as by its novel paradoxes, subtle disquisitions, strength of language, and dignity of style. Sir Kenelm Digby produced a volume of acute comment and mixed censure and speculation, which gave the work further importance. "Pseudodoxia" appeared ten years later, and passed through six editions in the lifetime of its author; it is noteworthy as much for the strangeness of the errors as for the quaintness of the refutations. In 1658 the discovery of some ancient urns in Norfolk gave rise to his treatise on urn burial, "Hydriotaphia"—a work full of antiquarian learning.

Sir Thomas Browne's style is flowing, rich with illustrations, and here and there poetical. It is marred by a want of uniformity. The reader is surprised by eccentric changes from polished thoughts to the most uncouth ideas. Coleridge has characterized Browne as "rich in various knowledge, exuberant in conceptions and conceits, contemplative, imaginative, often truly great in his style and diction, though doubtless too often big, stiff, and hyperlatinistic. In him the humorist constantly mingles with the philosopher." The two essays, "Of Toleration," and "Of Providence," are excellent examples of his style.

OF TOLERATION

I COULD never divide myself from any man upon the difference of an opinion, or be angry with his judgment for not agreeing with me in that from which, perhaps, within a few days, I should dissent myself. I have no genius to disputes in religion: and have often thought it wisdom to decline them, especially upon a disadvantage, or when the cause of truth might suffer in the weakness of my patronage. Where we desire to be informed, it is good to contest with men above ourselves; but, to confirm and establish our opinions, it is best to argue with judgments below our own, that the frequent spoils and victories over their reasons may settle in ourselves an esteem and confirmed opinion of our own. Every man is not a proper champion for truth, nor fit to take up the gauntlet in the cause of verity; many, from the ignorance of these maxims, and an inconsiderate zeal unto truth, have too rashly charged the troops of error, and remain as trophies unto the enemies of truth. A man may be in as just possession of truth as of a city, and yet be forced to surrender; it is therefore far better to enjoy her with peace than to hazard her on a battle. If, therefore, there rise any doubts in my way, I do forget them, or at least defer them, till my better settled judgment and more manly reason be able to resolve them; for I perceive every man's own reason is his best Œdipus, and will, upon a reasonable truce, find a way to loose those bonds wherewith the subtleties of error have enchained our more flexible and tender judgments. In philosophy, where truth seems double-faced, there is no man more paradoxical than myself: but in divinity I love to keep the road; and, though not in an implicit, yet a humble faith, follow the great wheel of the Church, by which I move; not reserving any proper poles, or motion from the epicycle of my own brain. By this means I have no gap for heresy, schisms, or errors, of which at present,

I hope I shall not injure truth to say, I have no taint or tincture. I must confess my greener studies have been polluted with two or three; not any begotten in the latter centuries, but old and obsolete, such as could never have been revived but by such extravagant and irregular heads as mine. For, indeed, heresies perish not with their authors; but, like the river Arethusa, though they lose their currents in one place, they rise up again in another. One general council is not able to extirpate one single heresy: it may be cancelled for the present; but revolution of time, and the like aspects from heaven, will restore it, when it will flourish till it be condemned again. For, as though there were metempsychosis, and the soul of one man passed into another, opinions do find, after certain revolutions, men and minds like those that first begat them. To see ourselves again, we need not look for Plato's year:[1] every man is not only himself; there have been many Diogenes, and as many Timons, though but few of that name; men are lived over again; the world is now as it was in ages past; there was none then, but there hath been someone since, that parallels him, and is, as it were, his revived self.

[1] A revolution of certain thousand years, when all things should return unto their former estate.

OF PROVIDENCE

THIS is the ordinary and open way of His providence, which art and industry have in good part discovered; whose effects we may foretell without an oracle. To foreshow these is not prophecy, but prognostication. There is another way, full of meanders and labyrinths, whereof the devil and spirits have no exact ephemerides: and that is a more particular and obscure method of His providence; directing the operations of individual and single essences: this we call fortune; that serpentine and crooked line, whereby He draws those actions His wisdom intends in a more unknown and secret way; this cryptic and involved method of His providence have I ever admired; nor can I relate the history of my life, the occurrences of my days, the escapes, or dangers, and hits of chance, with a *bezo las manos* to fortune, or a bare gramercy to my good stars. Abraham might have thought the ram in the thicket came thither by accident: human reason would have said that mere chance conveyed Moses in the ark to the sight of Pharaoh's daughter. What a labyrinth is there in the story of Joseph! able to convert a Stoic. Surely there are in every man's life certain rubs, doublings, and wrenches, which pass a while under the effects of chance; but at the last, well examined, prove the mere hand of God. It was not dumb chance that, to discover the fougade, or powder plot, contrived a miscarriage in the letter. I like the victory of '88 the better for that one occurrence which our enemies imputed to our dishonor, and the partiality of fortune; to wit, the tempests and contrariety of winds. King Philip did not detract from the nation, when he said he sent his Armada to fight with men, and not to combat with the winds. Where there is a manifest disproportion between the powers and forces of two several agents, upon a maxim of reason we may promise the victory to the superior: but when unexpected accidents slip

in, and unthought of occurrences intervene, these must proceed from a power that owes no obedience to those axioms; where, as in the writing upon the wall, we may behold the hand, but see not the spring that moves it. The success of that petty province of Holland (of which the Grand Seignior proudly said, if they should trouble him, as they did the Spaniard, he would send his men with shovels and pickaxes, and throw it into the sea) I cannot altogether ascribe to the ingenuity and industry of the people, but the mercy of God, that hath disposed them to such a thriving genius; and to the will of His providence, that disposeth her favor to each country in their preordinate season. All cannot be happy at once; for because the glory of one state depends upon the ruin of another, there is a revolution and vicissitude of their greatness, and must obey the swing of that wheel, not moved by intelligences, but by the hand of God, whereby all estates arise to their zenith and vertical points, according to their predestinated periods. For the lives, not only of men, but of commonwealths and the whole world, run not upon a helix that still enlargeth; but on a circle, where, arriving to their meridian, they decline in obscurity, and fall under the horizon again.

These must not therefore be named the effects of fortune but in a relative way, and as we turn the works of nature. It was the ignorance of man's reason that begat this very name, and by a careless term miscalled the providence of God: for there is no liberty for causes to operate in a loose and straggling way; nor any effect whatsoever but hath its warrant from some universal or superior cause. It is not a ridiculous devotion to say a prayer before a game at tables; for even in sortileges and matters of greatest uncertainty, there is a settled and preordered course of effects. It is we that are blind, not fortune. Because our eye is too dim to discover the mystery of her effects, we foolishly paint her blind, and hoodwink the providence of the Almighty. I cannot justify that contemptible proverb, that "fools only are fortunate"; or that insolent paradox, that "a wise man is out of the reach of fortune": much less those opprobrious epithets of poets—"whore," "bawd," and "strumpet." It is, I confess, the common fate of men of singular gifts of mind to be destitute of those of fortune; which doth not any way deject the spirit of

wiser judgments who thoroughly understand the justice of this proceeding; and, being enriched with higher donatives, cast a more careless eye on these vulgar parts of felicity. It is a most unjust ambition, to desire to engross the mercies of the Almighty, not to be content with the goods of mind, without a possession of those of body or fortune: and it is an error, worse than heresy, to adore these complemental and circumstantial pieces of felicity, and undervalue those perfections and essential points of happiness, wherein we resemble our Maker. To wiser desires it is satisfaction enough to deserve, though not to enjoy, the favors of fortune. Let Providence provide for fools: it is not partiality, but equity, in God, who deals with us but as our natural parents. Those that are able of body and mind He leaves to their deserts; to those of weaker merits He imparts a larger portion; and pieces out the defect of one by the excess of the other. Thus have we no just quarrel with nature for leaving us naked; or to envy the horns, hoofs, skins, and furs of other creatures; being provided with reason, that can supply them all. We need not labor, with so many arguments, to confute judicial astrology; for, if there be a truth therein, it doth not injure divinity. If to be born under Mercury disposeth us to be witty; under Jupiter to be wealthy; I do not owe a knee unto these, but unto that merciful hand that hath ordered my indifferent and uncertain nativity unto such benevolent aspects. Those that hold that all things are governed by fortune had not erred, had they not persisted there. The Romans, that erected a temple to fortune, acknowledged therein, though in a blinder way, somewhat of divinity; for, in a wise supputation, all things begin and end in the Almighty. There is a nearer way to heaven than Homer's chain; an easy logic may conjoin a heaven and earth in one argument, and, with less than a sorites, resolve all things to God. For though we christen effects by their most sensible and nearest causes, yet is God the true and infallible cause of all; whose concourse, though it be general, yet doth subdivide itself into the particular actions of everything, and is that spirit, by which each singular essence not only subsists, but performs its operation.

OF JESTING

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OF SELF-PRAISING

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OF COMPANY

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BY

THOMAS FULLER

THOMAS FULLER

1608—1661

Thomas Fuller was born at Aldwinkle, in Northamptonshire, in 1608. His father, rector of that parish, was probably his only teacher till, at the age of twelve, he sent him to Cambridge, where in 1628 he took the degree of Master of Arts. At the age of twenty-three he became prebend of Salisbury, and vicar of Broad Windsor. Here he spent some ten quiet years working in his parish and writing his "Holy War" and "Pisgah-Sight of Palestine." Tidings came to him from time to time of the struggle which was growing fiercer every day between the nation and the King. To Fuller, the son of a High-Churchman, and bred in the loyal University of Cambridge, devotion to the existing sovereign was the natural expression of allegiance to the King of kings, and it was with grief and horror that he heard of his country's apostasy. At last, impatient of inaction, he hastened to London. There, in many pulpits, chiefly those of the Savoy and the Inns of Court, he boldly preached submission to the Lord's Anointed. His earnestness and brilliant wit attracted crowds to listen to him, and drew upon him the observation of the Long Parliament, which was then sitting. In 1643 he was required to sign a declaration that he would support the measures of Parliament. He signed, with too many reservations to satisfy the authorities, and the oath was on the point of being tendered to him again, when Fuller quietly betook himself to the King's quarters at Oxford, saving thereby his conscience and losing his preferment. Lord Hopton made him his chaplain, and he became "preacher militant" to the King's soldiers. As he wandered about with the army he gathered materials for his "Worthies of England." But such a life was less favorable to his "Church History." It is of no value as a history till it reaches his own times, and yet it charms by the wit which sparkles in every page. In the spring of 1644 he left the army and took refuge in Exeter. It was during this lull that he wrote his "Good Thoughts in Bad Times." On the surrender of Exeter, Fuller obtained special terms from Fairfax, under which he returned to London. He was living in a small lodging, working at his "Worthies" and praying for the King's return, when "that royal martyr was murdered," and "the foul deed" so completely crushed him that it was long before he could take heart to work again. After 1655 the Protector allowed him freely to preach, though other Royalists were silenced. On the Restoration he was made Chaplain extraordinary to Charles II, and Doctor of Divinity by the University of Cambridge at the King's request. He died on August 12, 1661. He was twice married. His writings are full of graphic touches and deep wisdom, and though his quaint fancy often led him beyond the bounds of good taste, he was never irreverent in meaning. His piety and genial humor might well atone for greater faults.

Few writers tell a story better than Fuller; and none, perhaps, have equalled him in the art of conveying the truth under the guise of a familiar-sounding proverb. Fuller's style is free to a great extent from the Latinisms which form so large an element in those of most of his contemporaries. He is more idiomatic in diction, the structure of his sentences is simpler, and a larger proportion of the words are of Saxon derivation.

OF JESTING

HARMLESS mirth is the best cordial against the consumption of the spirits: wherefore jesting is not unlawful if it trespasseth not in quantity, quality, or season.

It is good to make a jest, but not to make a trade of jesting. The Earl of Leicester, knowing that Queen Elizabeth was much delighted to see a gentleman dance well, brought the master of the dancing-school to dance before her. "Pish," said the queen, "it is his profession, I will not see him." She liked it not where it was a master quality, but where it attended on other perfections. The same may we say of jesting.

Jest not with the two-edged sword of God's Word.[1] Will nothing please thee to wash thy hands in, but the font, or to drink healths in, but the church chalice? And know the whole art is learnt at the first admission, and profane jests will come without calling. If in the troublesome days of King Edward the Fourth, a citizen in Cheapside was executed as a traitor for saying he would make his son heir to the Crown,[2] though he only meant his own house, having a crown for the sign; more dangerous it is to wit-wanton it with the majesty of God. Wherefore, if without thine intention, and against thy will, by chance medley thou hittest Scripture in ordinary discourse, yet fly to the city of refuge, and pray to God to forgive thee.

Wanton jests make fools laugh, and wise men frown. Seeing we are civilized Englishmen, let us not be naked savages in our talk. Such rotten speeches are worst in withered age, when men run after that sin in their words which flieth from them in the deed.

Let not thy jests, like mummy, be made of dead men's flesh. Abuse not any that are departed; for to wrong their memories is to rob their ghosts of their winding-sheets.

[1] Μάχαιραν διστομὸν (Heb. iv. 12).

[2] Speed, in "Edward the Fourth."

Scoff not at the natural defects of any which are not in their power to amend. Oh, it is cruelty to beat a cripple with his own crutches! Neither flout any for his profession, if honest, though poor and painful. Mock not a cobbler for his black thumbs.

He that relates another man's wicked jests with delight adopts them to be his own. Purge them therefore from their poison. If the profaneness may be severed from the wit, it is like a lamprey; take out the string in the back, it may make good meat. But if the staple conceit consists in profaneness, then it is a viper, all poison, and meddle not with it.

He that will lose his friend for a jest, deserves to die a beggar by the bargain. Yet some think their conceits, like mustard, not good except they bite. We read that all those who were born in England the year after the beginning of the great mortality 1349,[4] wanted their four cheek-teeth. Such let thy jests be, that may not grind the credit of thy friend, and make not jests so long till thou becomest one.

No time to break jests when the heart-strings are about to be broken. No more showing of wit when the head is to be cut off, like that dying man, who, when the priest coming to him to give him extreme unction, asked of him where his feet were, answered, "At the end of my legs." But at such a time jests are an unmannerly *crepitus ingenii.* And let those take heed who end here with Democritus, that they begin not with Heraclitus hereafter.

[4] Tho. Walsingham, in *eodem anno.*

OF SELF-PRAISING

He whose own worth doth speak, need not speak his own worth. Such boasting sounds proceed from emptiness of desert: whereas the conquerors in the Olympian games did not put on the laurels on their own heads, but waited till some other did it. Only anchorets that want company may crown themselves with their own commendations.

It showeth more wit but no less vanity to commend one's self, not in a straight line, but by reflection. Some sail to the port of their own praise by a side wind; as when they dispraise themselves, stripping themselves naked of what is their due, that the modesty of the beholders may clothe them with it again, or when they flatter another to his face, tossing the ball to him that he may throw it back again to them; or when they commend that quality wherein themselves excel, in another man, though absent, whom all know far their inferior in that faculty; or lastly, to omit other ambushes men set to surprise praise, when they send the children of their own brain to be nursed by another man, and commend their own works in a third person; but if challenged by the company that they were authors of them themselves, with their tongues they faintly deny it, and with their faces strongly affirm it.

Self-praising comes most naturally from a man when it comes most violently from him in his own defence. For though modesty binds a man's tongue to the peace in this point, yet being assaulted in his credit he may stand upon his guard, and then he doth not so much praise as purge himself. One braved a gentleman to his face, that in skill and valor he came far behind him: "It is true," said the other, "for when I fought with you, you ran away before me." In such a case, it was well returned, and without any just aspersion of pride.

He that falls into sin is a man; that grieves at it is a saint; that boasteth of it is a devil. Yet some glory in their shame,

counting the stains of sin the best complexion for their souls. These men make me believe it may be true what Mandeville writes of the isle of Somabarre, in the East Indies, that all the nobility thereof brand their faces with a hot iron in token of honor.

He that boasts of sins never committed is a double devil. Many brag how many gardens of virginity they have deflowered, who never came near the walls thereof. . . . Others, who would sooner creep into a scabbard than draw a sword, boast of their robberies, to usurp the esteem of valor. Whereas first let them be well whipped for their lying, and as they like that, let them come afterward and entitle themselves to the gallows.

OF COMPANY

COMPANY is one of the greatest pleasures of the nature of man. For the beams of joy are made hotter by reflection, when related to another; and otherwise gladness itself must grieve for want of one to express itself to.

It is unnatural for a man to court and hug solitariness. It is observed, that the farthest islands in the world are so seated that there is none so remote but that from some shore of it another island or continent may be discerned; as if hereby nature invited countries to a mutual commerce, one with another. Why then should any man affect to environ himself with so deep and great reservedness, as not to communicate with the society of others? And though we pity those who made solitariness their refuge in time of persecution, we must condemn such as choose it in the Church's prosperity. For well may we count him not well in his wits who will live always under a bush, because others in a storm shelter themselves under it.

Yet a desert is better than a debauched companion. For the wildness of the place is but uncheerful, whilst the wildness of bad persons is also infectious. Better therefore ride alone than have a thief's company. And such is a wicked man who will rob thee of precious time, if he doth no more mischief. The Nazarites, who might drink no wine, were also forbidden (Num. vi. 3) to eat grapes, whereof wine is made. We must not only avoid sin itself, but also the causes and occasions thereof; amongst which bad company (the lime-twigs of the devil) is the chiefest, especially to catch those natures which, like the good-fellow planet, Mercury, are most swayed by others.

If thou beest cast into bad company, like Hercules thou must sleep with thy club in thine hand, and stand on thy guard. I mean if against thy will the tempest of an unexpected occasion

drives thee amongst such rocks; be thou like the river Dee, in Merionethshire in Wales,[1] which running through Pimblemere remains entire, and mingles not her streams with the waters of the lake. Though with them, be not of them; keep civil communion with them, but separate from their sins. And if against thy will thou fallest amongst wicked men, know to thy comfort thou art still in thy calling, and therefore in God's keeping, who on thy prayers will preserve thee.

The company he keeps is the comment by help whereof men expound the most close and mystical man; understanding him for one of the same religion, life, and manners with his associates. And though perchance he be not such a one, it is just he should be counted so for conversing with them. Augustus Cæsar came thus to discern his two daughters' inclinations: for being once at a public show, where much people were present, he observed that the grave senators talked with Livia, but loose youngsters and riotous persons with Julia.[2]

He that eats cherries with noblemen shall have his eyes spirted out with the stones. This outlandish proverb hath in it an English truth, that they who constantly converse with men far above their estates, shall reap shame and loss thereby; if thou payest nothing they will count thee a sucker, no branch; a wen, no member of their company; if in payments thou keepest pace with them, their long strides will soon tire thy short legs. The beavers in New England, when some ten of them together draw a stick to the building of their lodging, set the weakest beavers to the lighter end of the log,[3] and the strongest take the heaviest part thereof: whereas men often lay the greatest burthen on the weakest back; and great persons to teach meaner men to learn their distance, take pleasure to make them pay for their company. I expect such men who, having some excellent quality, are gratis very welcome to their betters; such a one, though he pays not a penny of the shot, spends enough in lending them his time and discourse.

To affect always to be the best of the company argues a base disposition. Gold always worn in the same purse with silver loses both of the color and weight; and so to converse always with inferiors, degrades a man of his worth. Such there are

[1] "Cambd. Brit. in Merioneth."
[2] Sueton., in "August. Cæs."
[3] Wood, in his "Description of New England."

that love to be the lords of the company, whilst the rest must be their tenants; as if bound by their lease to approve, praise, and admire whatsoever they say. These, knowing the lowness of their parts, love to live with dwarfs, that they may seem proper men. To come amongst their equals, they count it an abridgment of their freedom, but to be with their betters, they deem it flat slavery.

It is excellent for one to have a library of scholars, especially if they be plain to be read. I mean of a communicative nature, whose discourses are as full as fluent, and their judgments as right as their tongues ready: such men's talk shall be thy lectures. To conclude, good company is not only profitable whilst a man lives, but sometimes when he is dead. For he that was buried with the bones of Elisha, by a posthumous miracle of that prophet, recovered his life by lodging with such a grave-fellow.[4]

[4] 2 Kings xiii. 21.

ON EDUCATION

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BY

JOHN MILTON

JOHN MILTON

1608—1674

Far above all poets of his own age, and in learning, sublimity, and invention without an equal in the whole range of English literature, stands John Milton. He was born in London on December 9, 1608. In youth he was a hard student, and devoted his time most assiduously to classical literature. A remark of his has often been quoted, that he "cared not how late he came into life, only that he came fit." That he believed himself destined to become of note appears from his own words: "By labor and intense study (which I take to be my portion in this life), joined with the strong propensity of nature, I might perhaps leave something to after-times, as they should not willingly let it die." The idea of his unequalled poem of "Paradise Lost" was probably conceived as early as 1642, but it was not published till about twenty-five years after that date. When it was written, the British press was subject to a censorship, and he experienced some difficulty in getting it licensed, the sapient gentleman who then possessed the power of rejecting or sanctioning any works submitted to him, imagining that in the noble simile of the sun in an eclipse he discovered treason. It was, however, licensed, and sold to Samuel Simmons, a bookseller, for an immediate payment of £5, with a condition that on 1,300 copies being sold the author should receive £5 more, and the same for the second and third editions. In two years the sale of the poem gave the poet a right to his second payment, the receipt for which was signed April 26, 1669. The second edition was printed in 1674, but the author did not live to receive the stipulated payment; the third edition was published in 1678, when, the copyright devolving on Milton's widow, she agreed with Simmons to receive £8 for it; so that £18 was the sum-total paid for the best poem of the first of British poets. Milton died at his house in Bunhill Row, London, November 8, 1674.

Milton's chief prose works are: "Two Books on Reformation in England," "Prelatical Episcopacy," "Eikonoklastes," "Areopagitica," and "Treatise on Education." His prose, like that of many of our early writers, is of very unequal quality. Hallam says that his intermixture of familiar with learned phraseology is unpleasing, and the structure of his sentences elaborate; that he seldom reaches any harmony, and that his wit is poor and without ease. If the justness of Hallam's strictures must be admitted, we may also accept his praise that these writings glow with an intense love of liberty and truth, and contain frequent passages of the highest imaginative power, in which the majestic soul of Milton breathes such high thoughts as had not been uttered before.

ON EDUCATION

TO MASTER SAMUEL HARTLIB

I AM long since persuaded, Master Hartlib,[1] that to say or do aught worth memory and imitation, no purpose or respect should sooner move us than simply the love of God, and of mankind. Nevertheless to write now the reforming of education, though it be one of the greatest and noblest designs that can be thought on, and for the want whereof this nation perishes; I had not yet at this time been induced, but by your earnest entreaties and serious conjurements; as having my mind for the present half diverted in the pursuance of some other assertions, the knowledge and the use of which cannot but be a great furtherance both to the enlargement of truth, and honest living with much more peace. Nor should the laws of any private friendship have prevailed with me to divide thus, or transpose my former thoughts, but that I see those aims, those actions, which have won you with me the esteem of a person sent hither by some good providence from a far country to be the occasion and incitement of great good to this island.

2. And, as I hear, you have obtained the same repute with men of most approved wisdom, and some of the highest authority among us; not to mention the learned correspondence which you hold in foreign parts, and the extraordinary pains and diligence which you have used in this matter, both here and beyond the seas; either by the definite will of God so ruling, or the peculiar sway of nature, which also is God's working. Neither can I think that so reputed and so valued as you are, you would, to the forfeit of your own discerning ability, impose

[1] Of Hartlib little more is known than that he was a friend of Milton, who had studied with peculiar diligence the science of education, and to whom Sir William Petty subsequently dedicated one of his earliest works. From several expressions in this and the following paragraphs, he would appear to have been a foreigner; for he is spoken of as one sent hither from a far country, and allusion is made to his labors beyond the seas.

upon me an unfit and overponderous argument; but that the satisfaction which you profess to have received, from those incidental discourses which we have wandered into, hath pressed and almost constrained you into a persuasion, that what you require from me in this point, I neither ought nor can in conscience defer beyond this time both of so much need at once, and so much opportunity to try what God hath determined.

3. I will not resist therefore whatever it is, either of divine or human obligement, that you lay upon me; but will forthwith set down in writing, as you request me, that voluntary idea, which hath long, in silence, presented itself to me, of a better education, in extent and comprehension far more large, and yet of time far shorter, and of attainment far more certain, than hath been yet in practice. Brief I shall endeavor to be; for that which I have to say, assuredly this nation hath extreme need should be done sooner than spoken. To tell you therefore what I have benefited herein among old renowned authors, I shall spare; and to search what many modern Januas and Didactics, more than ever I shall read, have projected, my inclination leads me not. But if you can accept of these few observations which have flowered off, and are as it were the burnishing of many studious and contemplative years, altogether spent in the search of religious and civil knowledge, and such as pleased you so well in the relating, I here give you them to dispose of.

4. The end then of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith, makes up the highest perfection. But because our understanding cannot in this body found itself but on sensible things, nor arrive so clearly to the knowledge of God and things invisible, as by orderly conning over the visible and inferior creature, the same method is necessarily to be followed in all discreet teaching. And seeing every nation affords not experience and tradition enough for all kinds of learning, therefore we are chiefly taught the languages of those people who have at any time been most industrious after wisdom; so that language is but the instrument conveying to us things useful to be known. And though a linguist should

pride himself to have all the tongues that Babel cleft the world into,[2] yet if he have not studied the solid things in them, as well as the words and lexicons, he were nothing so much to be esteemed a learned man, as any yeoman or tradesman competently wise in his mother dialect only.

5. Hence appear the many mistakes which have made learning generally so unpleasing and so unsuccessful; first, we do amiss to spend seven or eight years merely in scraping together so much miserable Latin and Greek, as might be learned otherwise easily and delightfully in one year.[3] And that which casts our proficiency therein so much behind, is our time lost partly in too oft idle vacancies given both to schools and universities; partly in a preposterous exaction, forcing the empty wits of children to compose themes, verses, and orations, which are the acts of ripest judgment, and the final work of a head filled by long reading and observing, with elegant maxims and copious invention. These are not matters to be wrung from poor striplings, like blood out of the nose, or the plucking of untimely fruit. Besides the ill habit which they get of wretched barbarizing against the Latin and Greek idiom, with their untutored Anglicisms, odious to be read, yet not to be avoided without a well-continued and judicious conversing among pure authors digested, which they scarce taste.[4] Whereas, if after some preparatory grounds of speech by their certain forms got into memory, they were led to the praxis thereof in some chosen short book lessoned thoroughly to them, they might then forthwith proceed to learn the substance of good things, and arts in due order, which would bring the whole language quickly into their power. This I take to be the most rational and most profitable way of learning languages, and whereby we may best hope to give account to God of our youth spent herein.

6. And for the usual method of teaching arts, I deem it to be

[2] Though he himself understood many languages, and appears to have possessed a peculiar aptitude for this kind of learning, no one could be further than he from pedantry. In his view, language was merely the instrument of knowledge.

[3] On this subject, see Locke's "Essay on Education."

[4] Philips, a pupil of Milton, furnishes us with a list of the books which he himself made use of in teaching: these were, in Latin, the agricultural works of Cato, Columella, Varro, and Palladius, Celsus on "Medicine," Pliny's "Natural History," Vitruvius's "Architecture," Frontinus's "Stratagems," and the "Philosophical Poems of Lucretius and Manilius"; in Greek, Hesiod, Aratus, Dionysius Periegesis, Oppian's "Cynegetica and Halieutics," Apollonius Rhodius, Quintus Calaber, certain of Plutarch's philosophical works, Geminus's "Astronomy," Xenophon's "Cyropædia" and "Anabasis," Polyænus's "Stratagems," and Ælian's "Tactics."

an old error of universities, not yet well recovered from the scholastic grossness of barbarous ages, that instead of beginning with arts most easy (and those be such as are most obvious to the sense), they present their young unmatriculated novices, at first coming, with the most intellective abstractions of logic and metaphysics; so that they having but newly left those grammatic flats and shallows, where they stuck unreasonably to learn a few words with lamentable construction, and now on the sudden transported under another climate, to be tossed and turmoiled with their unballasted wits in fathomless and unquiet deeps of controversy, do for the most part grow into hatred and contempt of learning, mocked and deluded all this while with ragged notions and babblements, while they expected worthy and delightful knowledge; till poverty or youthful years call them importunately their several ways, and hasten them, with the sway of friends, either to an ambitious and mercenary or ignorantly zealous divinity; some allured to the trade of law, grounding their purposes not on the prudent and heavenly contemplation of justice and equity, which was never taught them, but on the promising and pleasing thoughts of litigious terms, fat contentions, and flowing fees; others betake them to state affairs, with souls so unprincipled in virtue and true generous breeding, that flattery and court-shifts and tyrannous aphorisms [5] appear to them the highest points of wisdom; instilling their barren hearts with a conscientious slavery; if, as I rather think, it be not feigned. Others, lastly, of a more delicious and airy spirit, retire themselves (knowing no better) to the enjoyments of ease and luxury, living out their days in feast and jollity; which indeed is the wisest and safest course of all these, unless they were with more integrity undertaken. And these are the errors, and these are the fruits of misspending our prime youth at the schools and universities as we do, either in learning mere words or such things chiefly as were better unlearned.

7. I shall detain you now no longer in the demonstration of what we should not do, but straight conduct you to a hill-side, where I will point you out the right path of a virtuous and

[5] His hatred and contempt of tyranny everywhere break forth. Bacon, himself a lawyer, likewise notices the too common effect of a laborious study of the law, which appears to have a natural tendency to narrow and enfeeble the mind. Our history, however, furnishes some brilliant exceptions.

noble education; laborious indeed at the first ascent, but else so smooth, so green, so full of goodly prospect, and melodious sounds on every side, that the harp of Orpheus was not more charming.[6] I doubt not but ye shall have more ado to drive our dullest and laziest youth, our stocks and stubs, from the infinite desire of such a happy nurture, than we have now to hale and drag our choicest and hopefullest wits to that asinine feast of sowthistles and brambles, which is commonly set before them as all the food and entertainment of their tenderest and most docible age. I call therefore a complete and generous education, that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war. And how all this may be done between twelve and one and twenty, less time than is now bestowed in pure trifling at grammar and sophistry, is to be thus ordered.

8. First, to find out a spacious house and ground about it fit for an academy, and big enough to lodge a hundred and fifty persons,[7] whereof twenty or thereabout may be attendants, all under the government of one, who shall be thought of desert sufficient, and ability either to do all, or wisely to direct and oversee it done. This place should be at once both school and university, not needing a remove to any other house of scholarship, except it be some peculiar college of law, or physic, where they mean to be practitioners; but as for those general studies which take up all our time from Lilly to commencing, as they term it, master of art, it should be absolute. After this pattern, as many edifices may be converted to this use as shall be needful in every city throughout this land, which would tend much to the increase of learning and civility everywhere. This number, less or more thus collected, to the convenience of a foot company, or interchangeably two troops of cavalry, should divide their day's work into three parts as it lies orderly; their studies, their exercise, and their diet.

[6] He had already, in Comus, described the delight derivable from the study of philosophy:

"How charming is divine philosophy!
Not harsh and crabbed as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets
Where no crude surfeit reigns."

[7] Nowhere has the material framework of Milton's system of education been more nearly approached than in the public schools of Egypt. The College of Kasserlyne, on the banks of the Nile, is such "a spacious house," with beautiful and ample grounds about it; but in the interior arrangements, the studies, and the results, we must not look for anything resembling what the poet proposed in this democratic establishment. See "Egypt and Mohammed Ali," vol. ii. p. 395 *sq.*

9. For their studies; first, they should begin with the chief and necessary rules of some good grammar, either that now used, or any better; and while this is doing, their speech is to be fashioned to a distinct and clear pronunciation, as near as may be to the Italian, especially in the vowels. For we Englishmen being far northerly, do not open our mouths in the cold air wide enough to grace a southern tongue; but are observed by all other nations to speak exceeding close and inward; so that to smatter Latin with an English mouth, is as ill a hearing as law French. Next, to make them expert in the usefullest points of grammar; and withal to season them and win them early to the love of virtue and true labor, ere any flattering seducement or vain principle seize them wandering, some easy and delightful book of education would be read to them; whereof the Greeks have store, as Cebes, Plutarch, and other Socratic discourses. But in Latin we have none of classic authority extant, except the two or three first books of Quintilian, and some select pieces elsewhere.

13. But here the main skill and groundwork will be to temper them such lectures and explanations upon every opportunity, as may lead and draw them in willing obedience, inflamed with the study of learning, and the admiration of virtue; stirred up with high hopes of living to be brave men, and worthy patriots, dear to God, and famous to all ages. That they may despise and scorn all their childish and ill-taught qualities, to delight in manly and liberal exercises; which he who hath the art and proper eloquence to catch them with, what with mild and effectual persuasions, and what with the intimation of some fear, if need be, but chiefly by his own example, might in a short space gain them to an incredible diligence and courage; infusing into their young breasts such an ingenuous and noble ardor, as would not fail to make many of them renowned and matchless men.[8] At the same time, some other hour of the day, might be taught them the rules of arithmetic, and soon after the elements of geometry, even playing, as the old manner was. After evening repast, till bedtime, their thoughts would be best

[8] He here alludes to the Socratic system of education, frequently glanced at in all the dialogues of Plato, but more fully developed in the Protagoras. In pursuing a plan of this kind, the teacher would profit no less less than the pupils—perhaps more. Adam Smith observes that almost all the great writers of Greece had been engaged in the business of education.

taken up in the easy grounds of religion, and the story of Scripture.

The next step would be to the authors of agriculture, Cato, Varro, and Columella, for the matter is most easy; and if the language be difficult, so much the better, it is not a difficulty above their years. And here will be an occasion of inciting and enabling them hereafter to improve the tillage of their country, to recover the bad soil, and to remedy the waste that is made of good;[9] for this was one of Hercules's praises. Ere half these authors be read (which will soon be with plying hard and daily) they cannot choose but be masters of any ordinary prose. So that it will be then seasonable for them to learn in any modern author the use of the globes, and all the maps, first, with the old names, and then with the new;[10] or they might be then capable to read any compendious method of natural philosophy.

12. And at the same time might be entering into the Greek tongue, after the same manner as was before prescribed in the Latin; whereby the difficulties of grammar being soon overcome, all the historical physiology of Aristotle and Theophrastus are open before them, and, as I may say, under contribution. The like access will be to Vitruvius, to Seneca's natural questions, to Mela, Celsus, Pliny, or Solinus. And having thus passed the principles of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and geography, with a general compact of physics, they may descend in mathematics to the instrumental science of trigonometry, and from thence to fortification, architecture, enginery, or navigation. And in natural philosophy they may proceed leisurely from the history of meteors, minerals, plants, and living creatures, as far as anatomy.

13. Then also in course might be read to them, out of some not tedious writer, the institution of physic,[11] that they may know

[9] Dr. Symmons remarks, that in agriculture no benefit could now be derived from the study of ancient authors. But Milton never intended that his pupils should seek to improve themselves in husbandry by reading Varro or Cato. His design extended no further than to render their boyish studies a means of awakening in their minds a love of rural pursuits, which age and experience might afterwards enable them to to turn to good account.

[10] This mode of studying geography has since been adopted, particularly at Eton, where, with the help of Arrowsmith's "Comparative Atlas," in which the ancient and modern maps of countries are bound up face to face, a lad may quickly acquire a knowledge at least of the elements of this useful science.

[11] Like Locke, Milton is said to have been fond of the study of medicine, and, by unskilfully tampering with it, to have injured his sight. But this report appears to rest on no good foundation.

the tempers, the humors, the seasons, and how to manage a crudity; which he who can wisely and timely do, is not only a great physician to himself and to his friends, but also may, at some time or other, save an army by this frugal and expenseless means only; and not let the healthy and stout bodies of young men rot away under him for want of this discipline; which is a great pity, and no less a shame to the commander. To set forward all these proceedings in nature and mathematics, what hinders but that they may procure, as oft as shall be needful, the helpful experience of hunters, fowlers, fishermen, shepherds, gardeners, apothecaries; and in the other sciences, architects, engineers, mariners, anatomists; who doubtless would be ready, some for reward, and some to favor such a hopeful seminary. And this will give them such a real tincture of natural knowledge, as they shall never forget, but daily augment with delight. Then also those poets which are now counted most hard will be both facile and pleasant, Orpheus, Hesiod, Theocritus, Aratus, Nicander, Oppian, Dionysius; and in Latin, Lucretius, Manilius, and the rural part of Vergil.

14. By this time, years and good general precepts, will have furnished them more distinctly with that act of reason which in ethics is called Proairesis; that they may with some judgment contemplate upon moral good and evil. Then will be required a special reinforcement of constant and sound indoctrinating, to set them right and firm, instructing them more amply in the knowledge of virtue and the hatred of vice; while their young and pliant affections are led through all the moral works of Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, Plutarch, Laertius, and those Locrian remnants;[12] but still to be reduced in their nightward studies wherewith they close the day's work, under the determinate sentence of David or Solomon, or the evangelists and apostolic Scriptures. Being perfect in the knowledge of personal duty, they may then begin the study of economics.[13] And either

[12] Timæus of Locris, who flourished about 390 B.C., was one of the masters of Plato. There remains, under his name, a treatise written in the Doric dialect, Περὶ ψυχᾶς κοσμοῦ καὶ φύσιος that is, "On the Soul of the World, and Nature." Its authenticity has been much disputed. In 1762, the Marquis d'Argens published at Berlin the Greek text, accompanied by a French translation, with philosophical dissertations.

[13] The works here alluded to are: 1. the Οἰκονομικὸς λόγος, of Xenophon, a Socratic dialogue, containing instructive details on Greek agriculture, and several anecdotes of the younger Cyrus. Cicero translated the work into Latin. 2. The Οἰκονομικὰ, attributed to Aristotle, but falsely, according to Schneider, who published a new edition of it, in 1815, at Leipsic. And, 3. The Γέωπονικὰ of Cassianus Bassus, which,

now or before this, they may have easily learned, at any odd hour, the Italian tongue. And soon after, but with wariness and good antidote, it would be wholesome enough to let them taste some choice comedies, Greek, Latin, or Italian; those tragedies also, that treat of household matters, as Trachiniæ, Alcestis, and the like.

15. The next removal must be to the study of politics; to know the beginning, end, and reasons of political societies;[14] that they may not, in a dangerous fit of the commonwealth, be such poor, shaken, uncertain reeds, of such a tottering conscience, as many of our great counsellors have lately shown themselves, but steadfast pillars of the state. After this, they are to dive into the grounds of law, and legal justice; delivered first and with best warrant by Moses; and as far as human prudence can be trusted, in those extolled remains of Grecian lawgivers, Lycurgus, Solon, Zaleucus, Charondas, and thence to all the Roman edicts and tables with their Justinian: and so down to the Saxon and common laws of England, and the statutes.

16. Sundays also and every evening may be now understandingly spent in the highest matters of theology, and church history, ancient and modern; and ere this time the Hebrew tongue at a set hour might have been gained, that the Scriptures may be now read in their own original; whereto it would be no impossibility to add the Chaldee and the Syrian dialect.[15] When all these employments are well conquered, then will the choice histories, heroic poems, and Attic tragedies of stateliest and most regal argument, with all the famous political orations, offer themselves; which if they were not only read, but some of them got by memory,[16] and solemnly pronounced with right accent and grace, as might be taught, would endue them even with the spirit and vigor of Demosthenes or Cicero, Euripides or Sophocles.

17. And now, lastly, will be the time to read with them those organic arts, which enable men to discourse and write perspicu-

amidst much that is worthless, contains many curious and interesting particulars.

[14] Politics were studied as a science in Milton's age; and the taste appears to be reviving.

[15] He here recommends nothing but what he himself understood.

[16] From the Phædrus we learn that it was the practice among the young men of Athens to commit entire speeches to memory. Xenophon, in the Memorabilia, introduces a youth who could repeat the whole Iliad; Cicero, De Oratore, speaks with commendation of this kind of mental exercise; and it may be observed, generally, that the science of mnemonics was cultivated much more carefully among the ancients than it has ever been in modern times.

ously, elegantly, and according to the fittest style, of lofty, mean, or lowly. Logic,[17] therefore, so much as is useful, is to be referred to this due place with all her well-couched heads and topics, until it be time to open her contracted palm into a graceful and ornate rhetoric, taught out of the rule of Plato, Aristotle, Phalereus, Cicero, Hermogenes, Longinus.[18] To which poetry would be made subsequent, or indeed rather precedent, as being less subtile and fine, but more simple, sensuous, and passionate. I mean not here the prosody of a verse, which they could not but have hit on before among the rudiments of grammar; but that sublime art which in Aristotle's poetics, in Horace, and the Italian commentaries of Castelvetro,[19] Tasso, Mazzoni, and others, teaches what the laws are of a true epic poem, what of a dramatic, what of a lyric, what decorum is, which is the grand masterpiece to observe. This would make them soon perceive what despicable creatures our common rhymers and play-writers be; and show them what religious, what glorious and magnificent use might be made of poetry, both in divine and human things.

18. From hence, and not till now, will be the right season of forming them to be able writers and composers in every excellent matter, when they shall be thus fraught with an universal insight into things. Or whether they be to speak in parliament or council, honor and attention would be waiting on their lips. There would then also appear in pulpits other visages, other gestures, and stuff otherwise wrought than what we now sit under, ofttimes to as great a trial of our patience as any other that they preach to us. These are the studies wherein our noble and our gentle youth ought to bestow their time, in a disciplinary way, from twelve to one and twenty: unless they rely more upon their ancestors dead, than upon themselves living. In which methodical course it is so supposed they must proceed by the steady pace of learning onward, as at convenient times, for memory's sake, to retire back into the middle ward, and sometimes into the rear of what they have been taught, un-

[17] In 1672, Milton himself published a work on Logic, entitled "Artis Logicæ Plenior Institutio, ad Petri Rami Methodum Concinnata, Adjecta est Praxis Analytica, et Patri Rami Vita. Libris Duobus."

[18] To these should undoubtedly be added Quinctilian and Vossius, the latter of whom has, by his compendious Rhetoric, done good service to the cause of eloquence. Of this work the second and best edition was published at Leyden, 1637.

[19] Piccolomini and Beni deserve also to be enumerated among the excellent commentators of the Poetics.

til they have confirmed and solidly united the whole body of their perfected knowledge, like the last embattling of a Roman legion. Now will be worth the seeing, what exercises and recreations may best agree, and become these studies.

19. The course of study hitherto briefly described is what I can guess by reading, likest to those ancient and famous schools of Pythagoras, Plato, Isocrates, Aristotle, and such others, out of which were bred such a number of renowned philosophers, orators, historians, poets, and princes all over Greece, Italy, and Asia, besides the flourishing studies of Cyrene and Alexandria. But herein it shall exceed them, and supply a defect as great as that which Plato noted in the commonwealth of Sparta;[20] whereas that city trained up their youth most for war, and these in their academies and Lyceum all for the gown, this institution of breeding which I here delineate shall be equally good both for peace and war. Therefore about an hour and a half ere they eat at noon should be allowed them for exercise, and due rest afterwards; but the time for this may be enlarged at pleasure, according as their rising in the morning shall be early.

20. The exercise which I commend first is the exact use of their weapon, to guard, and to strike safely with edge or point; this will keep them healthy, nimble, strong, and well in breath; is also the likeliest means to make them grow large, and tall, and to inspire them with a gallant and fearless courage, which being tempered with seasonable lectures and precepts to them of true fortitude and patience will turn into a native and heroic valor, and make them hate the cowardice of doing wrong. They must be also practised in all the locks and gripes of wrestling, wherein Englishmen were wont to excel,[21] as need may

[20] See Plato, "De Legibus," l. i. Opera, t. vii. p. 181 *sq.* edit. Bekk. Aristotle notices the same defect in the Spartan government; and adds that, though military superiority was the object aimed at by Lycurgus, they had been excelled by their neighbors (the Athenians?) no less in the virtues of war than in the arts of peace.—"Politics," l. ii. and l. v. c. 4. Müller, in his "History and Antiquity of the Doric Race," endeavors to exalt the political institutions of the Spartans above the popular governments of the Ionians.—Vol. ii., p. 1-269.

[21] Aristotle's remarks on the employment of exercise in education are full of good sense. He allows, as might have been expected, that the culture of the body should precede that of the mind; but is far from inculcating, with many writers, the necessity of acquiring athletic habits of body, which have, on the growth and shape, effects no less injurious than on the intellect. At Sparta, where gymnastic exercises were not pursued as a profession, excessive labor produced no less dangerous results—unfeeling and ferocious habits. During the years preceding puberty all violent exercises and forced regimens are pernicious; which is clear from the fact that, of those who won the prize in boyhood in the Olympic contests, not above two or three had again proved victors in manhood.—"Politics," l. v. c. 4;

often be in fight to tug, to grapple, and to close. And this perhaps will be enough, wherein to prove and heat their single strength.

21. The interim of unsweating themselves regularly, and convenient rest before meat, may, both with profit and delight, be taken up in recreating and composing their travailed spirits with the solemn and divine harmonies of music,[22] heard or learned; either whilst the skilful organist plies his grave and fancied descant in lofty fugues, or the whole symphony with artful and unimaginable touches adorn and grace the well-studied chords of some choice composer; sometimes the lute or soft organ-stop waiting on elegant voices, either to religious, martial, or civil ditties; which, if wise men and prophets be not extremely out, have a great power over dispositions and manners, to smooth and make them gentle from rustic harshness and distempered passions. The like also would not be inexpedient after meat, to assist and cherish nature in her first concoction, and send their minds back to study in good tune and satisfaction. Where having followed it close under vigilant eyes, till about two hours before supper, they are, by a sudden alarum or watchword, to be called out to their military motions, under sky or covert, according to the season, as was the Roman wont; first on foot, then, as their age permits, on horseback, to all the art of cavalry; that having in sport, but with much exactness and daily muster, served out the rudiments of their soldiership, in all the skill of embattling, marching, encamping, fortifying, besieging, and battering, with all the helps of ancient and modern stratagems, tactics, and warlike maxims, they may as it were out of a long war come forth renowned and perfect commanders in the service of their country. They would not then, if they were trusted with fair and hopeful armies, suffer them, for want of just and wise discipline, to shed away from about them like sick feathers, though they be never so oft supplied; they would not suffer their

see also l. ii. c. 3. Plato, in his "Republic," observes that too continuous an application to gymnastics, to the neglect of music, engenders ferocity.—"Opera," t. vi. 152.

[22] In his "L'Allegro" he thus describes the delights of music:

"And ever against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony."

empty and unrecruitable colonels of twenty men in a company, to quaff out or convey into secret hoards, the wages of a delusive list, and a miserable remnant; yet in the mean while to be overmastered with a score or two of drunkards, the only soldiery left about them, or else to comply with all rapines and violences. No, certainly, if they knew aught of that knowledge that belongs to good men or good governors, they would not suffer these things.

22. But to return to our own institute; besides these constant exercises at home, there is another opportunity of gaining experience to be won from pleasure itself abroad; in those vernal seasons of the year when the air is calm and pleasant, it were an injury and sullenness against nature, not to go out and see her riches, and partake in her rejoicing with heaven and earth. I should not therefore be a persuader to them of studying much then, after two or three years that they have well laid their grounds, but to ride out in companies, with prudent and staid guides, to all the quarters of the land: learning and observing all places of strength, all commodities of building and of soil, for towns and tillage, harbors and ports for trade. Sometimes taking sea as far as to our navy, to learn there also what they can in the practical knowledge of sailing and of sea-fight.

23. These ways would try all their peculiar gifts of nature; and if there were any secret excellence among them would fetch it out, and give it fair opportunities to advance itself by, which could not but mightily redound to the good of this nation, and bring into fashion again those old admired virtues and excellencies, with far more advantage now in this purity of Christian knowledge. Nor shall we then need the monsieurs of Paris to take our hopeful youth into their slight and prodigal custodies, and send them over, back again, transformed into mimics, apes, and kickshaws. But if they desire to see other countries at three or four and twenty years of age, not to learn principles, but to enlarge experience, and make wise observation, they will by that time be such as shall deserve the regard and honor of all men where they pass, and the society and friendship of those in all places who are best and most eminent. And, perhaps, then other nations will be glad to visit us for their breeding, or else to imitate us in their own country.

24. Now, lastly, for their diet there cannot be much to say,

save only that it would be best in the same house; for much time else would be lost abroad, and many ill habits got; and that it should be plain, healthful, and moderate, I suppose is out of controversy. Thus, Mr. Hartlib, you have a general view in writing, as your desire was, of that which at several times I had discoursed with you concerning the best and noblest way of education; not beginning, as some have done, from the cradle, which yet might be worth many considerations, if brevity had not been my scope; many other circumstances also I could have mentioned, but this, to such as have the worth in them to make trial, for light and direction may be enough. Only I believe that this is not a bow for every man to shoot in, that counts himself a teacher; but will require sinews almost equal to those which Homer gave Ulysses; yet I am withal persuaded that it may prove much more easy in the assay, than it now seems at distance, and much more illustrious; howbeit, not more difficult than I imagine, and that imagination presents me with nothing but very happy, and very possible according to best wishes; if God have so decreed, and this age have spirit and capacity enough to apprehend.

OF GREATNESS

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OF MYSELF

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BY

ABRAHAM COWLEY

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1618—1667

Literature has changed greatly in the last two hundred years, not only in form and substance, but in relation to the basis upon which it rests. In the seventeenth century writing was a gentle accomplishment, an after-dinner pastime, an art to be acquired by the study of Latin authors. Courtiers, in starched ruff and doublet, told their affection for Dresden-china mistresses in coldly passionate sonnets, of regular rhyme and metre. No one felt at liberty to write without the Greek mythology at his elbow, for it was the fashion to weave the gentle by-play of nymphs and naiads into polite writing. Men learned to write as we now learn to play golf, and the result bears the same relation to potential literature as the play of golf bears to modern business. So there grew up in that period a band of essayists and poets whose productions were those of the hot-house and the boudoir, artificial, inert, vacuous. Cowley was of this school, though he possessed some true literary genius, which was almost stifled by the false training of the age, and by the false ideals he set up for himself.

Much of his work was precocious. In 1633, when he was but fifteen years of age, he published a small volume, called " Poetical Blossoms." This work contains many passages of genuine poetic feeling, and is a marvellous production for a schoolboy. Cowley was a Royalist, and he followed the exiled Stuarts to France, where he was in intimate relation with many prominent persons of the exiled court. After the Restoration he was disappointed in not receiving the political preferment he hoped for, so he retired to his country house on the Thames, where the remainder of his life was spent in study and writing. He died there in 1667.

It is hard to realize that Cowley was considered a great poet in his day. He has left to posterity " The Mistress," the " Davideis," and many odes after the manner of Pindar—all stilted, tedious, and artificial. But in his essays his style is natural and simple. The essay on " Myself " is probably the best of his shorter prose writings. The study of Cowley is useful only from the standpoint of historical criticism. He has no place in the breathing, moving, vital literature of to-day. The message he brought has long since been assimilated, and the readers of to-day are upon a broader and higher plane of culture.

OF GREATNESS

SINCE we cannot attain to greatness," says the Sieur de Montaigne, " let us have our revenge by railing at it: " this he spoke but in jest. I believe he desired it no more than I do, and had less reason; for he enjoyed so plentiful and honorable a fortune in a most excellent country, as allowed him all the real conveniences of it, separated and purged from the incommodities. If I were but in his condition, I should think it hard measure, without being convinced of any crime, to be sequestrated from it, and made one of the principal officers of state. But the reader may think that what I now say is of small authority, because I never was, nor ever shall be, put to the trial: I can therefore only make my protestation:

> If ever I more riches did desire
> Than cleanliness and quiet do require:
> If e'er ambition did my fancy cheat,
> With any wish, so mean as to be great,
> Continue, Heaven, still from me to remove
> The humble blessings of that life I love.

I know very many men will despise, and some pity me, for this humor, as a poor-spirited fellow; but I am content, and, like Horace, thank God for being so.

> " *Di bene fecerunt, inopis me quodque pusilli,*
> *Finxerunt animi.*" [1]

I confess I love littleness almost in all things. A little convenient estate, a little cheerful house, a little company, and a very little feast; and, if I were to fall in love again (which is a great passion, and therefore, I hope, I have done with it), it would be, I think, with prettiness, rather than with majestical beauty. I would neither wish that my mistress, nor my fortune,

[1] Horace, Sat. I. iv. 17: " The gods have done well in making me a humble and small-spirited fellow."

should be a *bona roba,* nor, as Homer uses to describe his beauties, like a daughter of great Jupiter, for the stateliness and largeness of her person; but, as Lucretius says,

"*Parvula, pumilio,* Χαρίτων μία, *tota merum sal.*"

Where there is one man of this, I believe there are a thousand of Senecio's mind, whose ridiculous affectation of grandeur Seneca the elder describes to this effect: Senecio was a man of a turbid and confused wit, who could not endure to speak any but mighty words and sentences, till this humor grew at last into so notorious a habit, or rather disease, as became the sport of the whole town: he would have no servants, but huge, massy fellows; no plate or household stuff, but thrice as big as the fashion: you may believe me, for I speak it without raillery, his extravagancy came at last into such a madness that he would not put on a pair of shoes, each of which was not big enough for both his feet: he would eat nothing but what was great, nor touch any fruit but horse-plums and pound-pears: he kept a concubine that was a very giantess, and made her walk too always in chiopins, till at last he got the surname of Senecio Grandio, which, Messala said, was not his *cognomen,* but his *cognomentum:* when he declaimed for the three hundred Lacedæmonians, who alone opposed Xerxes's army of above three hundred thousand, he stretched out his arms, and stood on tiptoes, that he might appear the taller, and cried out, in a very loud voice: "I rejoice, I rejoice"—we wondered, I remember what new great fortune had befallen his eminence—"Xerxes," says he, "is all mine own. He who took away the sight of the sea with the canvas veils of so many ships"—and then he goes on so, as I know not what to make of the rest, whether it be the fault of the edition, or the orator's own burly way of nonsense.

This is the character that Seneca gives of this hyperbolical fop, whom we stand amazed at, and yet there are very few men who are not in some things, and to some degrees, *grandios.* Is anything more common than to see our ladies of quality wear such high shoes as they cannot walk in, without one to lead them; and a gown as long again as their body, so that they cannot stir to the next room, without a page or two to hold it up? I may safely say that all the ostentation of our grandees is just

like a train, of no use in the world, but horribly cumbersome and incommodious. What is all this but a spice of *grandio?* how tedious would this be if we were always bound to it! I do believe there is no king who would not rather be deposed than endure, every day of his reign, all the ceremonies of his coronation.

The mightiest princes are glad to fly often from these majestic pleasures (which is, methinks, no small disparagement to them) as it were for refuge, to the most contemptible divertisements, and meanest recreations, of the vulgar, nay, even of children. One of the most powerful and fortunate princes of the world,[2] of late, could find out no delight so satisfactory, as the keeping of little singing birds, and hearing of them, and whistling to them. What did the emperors of the whole world? If ever any men had the free and full enjoyment of all human greatness (nay, that would not suffice, for they would be gods too), they certainly possessed it: and yet one of them, who styled himself lord and god of the earth, could not tell how to pass his whole day pleasantly, without spending constantly two or three hours in catching of flies, and killing them with a bodkin, as if his godship had been Beelzebub.[3] One of his predecessors, Nero (who never put any bounds, nor met with any stop to his appetite), could divert himself with no pastime more agreeable than to run about the streets all night in a disguise, and abuse the women, and affront the men whom he met, and sometimes to beat them, and sometimes to be beaten by them: this was one of his imperial nocturnal pleasures. His chiefest in the day was to sing and play upon a fiddle, in the habit of a minstrel, upon the public stage: he was prouder of the garlands that were given to his divine voice (as they called it then) in those kind of prizes than all his forefathers were of their triumphs over nations: he did not at his death complain that so mighty an emperor, and the last of all the Cæsarian race of deities, should be brought to so shameful and miserable an end; but only cried out, "Alas! what pity it is that so excellent a musician should perish in this manner!" His uncle Claudius spent half his time at playing at dice; that was the main fruit

[2] Louis XIII. The Duke of Luynes, Constable of France, is said to have gained the favor of this powerful prince by training up singing birds for him.—*Anonymous.*

[3] Beelzebub signifies the Lord of Flies.—*Cowley.*

of his sovereignty. I omit the madnesses of Caligula's delights, and the execrable sordidness of those of Tiberius. Would one think that Augustus himself, the highest and most fortunate of mankind, a person endowed too with many excellent parts of nature, should be so hard put to it sometimes for want of recreations, as to be found playing at nuts and bounding-stones with little Syrian and Moorish boys, whose company he took delight in, for their prating and their wantonness?

> Was it for this that Rome's best blood he spilt,
> With so much falsehood, so much guilt?
> Was it for this, that his ambition strove
> To equal Cæsar, first; and after, Jove?
> Greatness is barren, sure, of solid joys;
> Her merchandise (I fear) is all in toys:
> She could not else, sure, so uncivil be,
> To treat his universal majesty,
> His new-created deity,
> With nuts and bounding-stones and boys.

But we must excuse her for this meagre entertainment; she has not really wherewithal to make such feasts as we imagine. Her guests must be contented sometimes with but slender cates, and with the same cold meats served over and over again, even till they become nauseous. When you have pared away all the vanity, what solid and natural contentment does there remain, which may not be had with five hundred pounds a year? Not so many servants or horses; but a few good ones, which will do all the business as well: not so many choice dishes at every meal; but at several meals all of them, which makes them both the more healthy, and the more pleasant: not so rich garments, nor so frequent changes; but as warm and as comely, and so frequent change too, as is every jot as good for the master, though not for the tailor or *valet de chambre:* not such a stately palace, nor gilt rooms, or the costliest sorts of tapestry; but a convenient brick house, with decent wainscot, and pretty forest-work hangings. Lastly (for I omit all other particulars, and will end with that which I love most in both conditions), not whole woods cut in walks, nor vast parks, nor fountain or cascade gardens; but herb, and flower, and fruit gardens, which are more useful, and the water every whit as clear and wholesome as if it darted from the breasts of a marble nymph, or the urn of a river god.

If, for all this, you like better the substance of that former estate of life, do but consider the inseparable accidents of both: servitude, disquiet, danger, and, most commonly, guilt, inherent in the one; in the other, liberty, tranquillity, security, and innocence. And when you have thought upon this, you will confess that to be a truth which appeared to you before but a ridiculous paradox, that a low fortune is better guarded and attended than a high one. If, indeed, we look only upon the flourishing head of the tree, it appears a most beautiful object,

> "*Sed quantum vertice ad auras*
> *Ætherias, tantum radice in Tartara tendit.*"
>
> As far as up towards heaven the branches grow,
> So far the roots sink down to hell below.

Another horrible disgrace to greatness is, that it is for the most part in pitiful want and distress. What a wonderful thing is this! Unless it degenerate into avarice, and so cease to be greatness, it falls perpetually into such necessities as drive it into all the meanest and most sordid ways of borrowing, cozenage, and robbery:

> "*Mancipiis locuples, eget æris Cappadocum rex.*"

This is the case of almost all great men, as well as of the poor King of Cappadocia: they abound with slaves, but are indigent of money. The ancient Roman emperors, who had the riches of the whole world for their revenue, had wherewithal to live (one would have thought) pretty well at ease, and to have been exempt from the pressures of extreme poverty. But, yet with most of them it was much otherwise; and they fell perpetually into such miserable penury, that they were forced to devour or squeeze most of their friends and servants, to cheat with infamous projects, to ransack and pillage all their provinces. This fashion of imperial grandeur is imitated by all inferior and subordinate sorts of it, as if it were a point of honor. They must be cheated of a third part of their estates; two other thirds they must expend in vanity; so that they remain debtors for all the necessary provisions of life, and have no way to satisfy those debts, but out of the succors and supplies of rapine: "As riches increase," says Solomon, "so do

the mouths that devour them."[4] The master mouth has no more than before. The owner, methinks, is like Ocnus in the fable, who is perpetually winding a rope of hay, and an ass at the end perpetually eating it.

Out of these inconveniences arises naturally one more, which is, that no greatness can be satisfied or contented with itself: still, if it could mount up a little higher, it would be happy; if it could gain but that point, it would obtain all its desires; but yet at last, when it is got up to the very top of the Peak of Teneriffe, it is in very great danger of breaking its neck downwards, but in no possibility of ascending upwards into the seat of tranquillity above the moon. The first ambitious men in the world, the old giants, are said to have made an heroical attempt of scaling heaven in despite of the gods; and they cast Ossa upon Olympus, and Pelion upon Ossa: two or three mountains more, they thought, would have done their business; but the thunder spoilt all the work, when they were come up to the third story.

> And what a noble plot was crossed!
> And what a brave design was lost!

A famous person of their offspring, the late giant of our nation, when, from the condition of a very inconsiderable captain, he made himself lieutenant-general of an army of little Titans, which was his first mountain, and afterwards general, which was his second, and after that, absolute tyrant of three kingdoms, which was the third, and almost touched the heaven which he affected, is believed to have died with grief and discontent, because he could not attain to the honest name of a king, and the old formality of a crown, though he had before exceeded the power by a wicked usurpation. If he could have compassed that, he would perhaps have wanted something else that is necessary to felicity, and pined away for the want of the title of an emperor or a god. The reason of this is, that greatness has no reality in nature, but is a creature of the fancy, a notion that consists only in relation and comparison: it is indeed an idol; but St. Paul teaches us "that an idol is worth nothing in the world." There is, in truth, no rising or meridian of the sun, but only in respect to several places: there is no

[4] Eccles. v. 11.

right or left, no upper hand, in nature; everything is little, and everything is great, according as it is diversely compared. There may be perhaps some village in Scotland or Ireland, where I might be a great man; and in that case I should be like Cæsar (you would wonder how Cæsar and I should be like one another in anything); and choose rather to be the first man of the village, than second at Rome. Our country is called Great Britainy, in regard only of a lesser of the same name; it would be but a ridiculous epithet for it, when we consider it together with the Kingdom of China. That, too, is but a pitiful rood of ground, in comparison of the whole earth besides: and this whole globe of earth, which we account so immense a body, is but one point or atom in relation to those numberless worlds that are scattered up and down in the infinite space of the sky which we behold.

OF MYSELF

IT is a hard and nice subject for a man to write of himself;[1] it grates his own heart to say anything of disparagement and the reader's ears to hear anything of praise from him. There is no danger from me of offending him in this kind; neither my mind, nor my body, nor my fortune allow me any materials for that vanity. It is sufficient for my own contentment that they have preserved me from being scandalous, or remarkable on the defective side. But besides that, I shall here speak of myself only in relation to the subject of these precedent discourses,[2] and shall be likelier thereby to fall into the contempt than rise up to the estimation of most people. As far as my memory can return back into my past life, before I knew or was capable of guessing what the world, or glories, or business of it were, the natural affections of my soul gave me a secret bent of aversion from them, as some plants are said to turn away from others, by an antipathy imperceptible to themselves and inscrutable to man's understanding. Even when I was a very young boy at school,[3] instead of running about on holidays and playing with my fellows, I was wont to steal from them and walk into the fields, either alone with a book, or with some one companion, if I could find any of the same temper. I was then, too, so much an enemy to all constraint, that my masters could never prevail on me, by any persuasions or encouragements, to learn without book the common rules of grammar, in which they dispensed with me alone, because they found I made a shift to do the usual exercise out of my own reading and observation. That I was then of the same mind as I am now (which I confess I wonder

[1] *Cf.* "Spectator," No. 562, where Addison discourses on "Egotism," and misquotes this sentence from Cowley.

[2] "Of Myself" is the last of eleven essays comprised under the title "Several Discourses by way of Essays in Prose and Verse."

[3] Cowley entered Westminster School when about ten years old. In 1636 he became a scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge.

at myself) may appear by the latter end of an ode[4] which I made when I was but thirteen years old, and which was then printed with many other verses. The beginning of it is boyish, but of this part which I here set down, if a very little were corrected, I should hardly now be much ashamed.

IX

This only grant me, that my means may lie
Too low for envy, for contempt too high.
Some honor I would have,
Not from great deeds, but good alone.
The unknown are better than ill known.
Rumor can ope the grave;
Acquaintance I would have, but when 't depends
Not on the number, but the choice of friends.

X

Books should, not business, entertain the light,
And sleep, as undisturbed as death, the night.
My house a cottage, more
Than palace, and should fitting be
For all my use, no luxury.
My garden painted o'er
With Nature's hand, not Art's; and pleasures yield,
Horace might envy in his Sabine field.

XI

Thus would I double my life's fading space,
For he that runs it well, twice runs his race.
And in this true delight,
These unbought sports, this happy state,
I would not fear, nor wish my fate,
But boldly say each night,
To-morrow let my sun his beams display,
Or in clouds hide them—I have lived to-day.

You may see by it I was even then acquainted with the poets (for the conclusion is taken out of Horace),[5] and perhaps it was the immature and immoderate love of them which stamped first, or rather engraved, these characters in me. They were like letters cut into the bark of a young tree, which with the tree still grow proportionably. But how this love came to be

[4] The stanzas quoted form the conclusion of a poem entitled "A Vote," which appeared in "Sylva" of 1636.

[5] "Odes," III. xxix. 41.

produced in me so early is a hard question. I believe I can tell the particular little chance that filled my head first with such chimes of verse as have never since left ringing there. For I remember when I began to read, and to take some pleasure in it, there was wont to lie in my mother's parlor (I know not by what accident, for she herself never in her life read any book but of devotion), but there was wont to lie Spenser's works; this I happened to fall upon, and was infinitely delighted with the stories of the knights, and giants, and monsters, and brave houses, which I found everywhere there (though my understanding had little to do with all this); and by degrees with the tinkling of the rhyme and dance of the numbers, so that I think I had read him all over before I was twelve years old, and was thus made a poet as irremediably as a child is made a eunuch. With these affections of mind, and my heart wholly set upon letters, I went to the university, but was soon torn from thence by that violent public storm [1] which would suffer nothing to stand where it did, but rooted up every plant, even from the princely cedars to me, the hyssop. Yet I had as good fortune as could have befallen me in such a tempest; for I was cast by it into the family of one of the best persons, and into the court of one of the best princesses of the world. Now though I was here engaged in ways most contrary to the original design of my life, that is, into much company, and no small business, and into a daily sight of greatness, both militant and triumphant, for that was the state then of the English and French courts; yet all this was so far from altering my opinion, that it only added the confirmation of reason to that which was before but natural inclination. I saw plainly all the paint of that kind of life, the nearer I came to it; and that beauty which I did not fall in love with when, for aught I knew, it was real, was not like to bewitch or entice me when I saw that it was adulterate. I met with several great persons, whom I liked very well, but could not perceive that any part of their greatness was to be liked or desired, no more than I would be glad or content to be in a storm, though I saw many ships which rid safely and bravely in it. A storm would not agree with my stomach, if it did with my courage. Though I was in a crowd

[1] In 1643 Cowley, as a Loyalist, had to leave Cambridge. A year after, he went to Paris, as secretary to Lord Jermyn, the adviser of Queen Henrietta Maria.

of as good company as could be found anywhere, though I was in business of great and honorable trust, though I ate at the best table, and enjoyed the best conveniences for present subsistence that ought to be desired by a man of my condition in banishment and public distresses, yet I could not abstain from renewing my old schoolboy's wish in a copy of verses to the same effect:—

> Well then; I now do plainly see,
> This busy world and I shall ne'er agree, etc.[2]

And I never then proposed to myself any other advantage from His Majesty's happy restoration, but the getting into some moderately convenient retreat in the country, which I thought in that case I might easily have compassed, as well as some others, with no greater probabilities or pretences, have arrived to extraordinary fortunes. But I had before written a shrewd prophecy against myself, and I think Apollo inspired me in the truth, though not in the elegance of it[3]:—

> Thou, neither great at court nor in the war,
> Nor at th' exchange shalt be, nor at the wrangling bar;
> Content thyself with the small barren praise,
> Which neglected verse does raise.
> She spoke; and all my years to come
> Took their unlucky doom.
> Their several ways of life let others chuse,
> Their several pleasures let them use;
> But I was born for Love and for a Muse.
>
> What Fate what boots it to contend?
> Such I began, such am, and so must end.
> The star that did my being frame
> Was but a lambent flame,
> And some small light it did dispense,
> But neither heat nor influence.
> No matter, Cowley; let proud Fortune see
> That thou canst her despise no less than she does thee
>
> Let all her gifts the portion be
> Of folly, lust, and flattery,
> Fraud, extortion, calumny,
> Murder, infidelity,
> Rebellion and hypocrisy.

[2] The opening lines of "The Wish," one of the poems published in 1647 under the collective name of "The Mistress."

[3] The following poem is from "Destiny," the seventh of Cowley's fifteen "Pindaric Odes," published in 1656.

Do thou not grieve nor blush to be,
As all th' inspired tuneful men,
And all thy great forefathers were, from Homer down to Ben.

However, by the failing of the forces which I had expected, I did not quit the design which I had resolved on; I cast myself into it *À corps perdu,* without making capitulations or taking counsel of fortune. But God laughs at a man who says to his soul, "Take thy ease": I met presently not only with many little encumbrances and impediments, but with so much sickness (a new misfortune to me) as would have spoiled the happiness of an emperor as well as mine. Yet I do neither repent nor alter my course. *Non ego perfidum dixi sacramentum.* Nothing shall separate me from a mistress which I have loved so long, and have now at last married, though she neither has brought me a rich portion, nor lived yet so quietly with me as I hoped from her.

———*Nec vos, dulcissima mundi*
Nomina, vos Musæ, libertas, otia, libri,
Hortique sylvæque anima remanente reliquam.

Nor by me e'er shall you,
You of all names the sweetest, and the best,
You Muses, books, and liberty, and rest;
You gardens, fields, and woods forsaken be,
As long as life itself forsakes not me.

But this is a very petty ejaculation. Because I have concluded all the other chapters with a copy of verses, I will maintain the humor to the last.

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Vitam quæ faciunt beatiorem, etc.

Since, dearest friend, 'tis your desire to see
A true receipt of happiness from me;
These are the chief ingredients, if not all:
Take an estate neither too great nor small,
Which *quantum sufficit* the doctors call;
Let this estate from parents' care descend:
The getting it too much of life does spend.
Take such a ground, whose gratitude may be
A fair encouragement for industry.

Let constant fires the winter's fury tame,
And let thy kitchens be a vestal flame.
Thee to the town let never suit at law,
And rarely, very rarely, business draw.
Thy active mind in equal temper keep,
In undisturbèd peace, yet not in sleep.
Let exercise a vigorous health maintain,
Without which all the composition's vain.
In the same weight prudence and innocence take,
Ana [4] of each does the just mixture make.
But a few friendships wear, and let them be
By Nature and by Fortune fit for thee.

[4] An equal quantity.

AGAINST EXCESSIVE GRIEF

—

BY

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE

1628—1699

Sir William Temple, the son of Sir John Temple, Master of the Rolls in Ireland, was born in 1628, and studied at Cambridge, under the learned Dr. Hammond, his maternal uncle. He began to travel in his twenty-fifth year, and spent six years in France, Holland, Flanders, and Germany. In 1655 he was engaged in promoting an alliance between England, Sweden, and Holland. Becoming resident minister at the Hague, he was useful in promoting the marriage of the Prince of Orange with Mary, eldest daughter of the Duke of York, which took place in 1677. On refusing to sanction an intended breach with Holland, he was recalled from his post in 1671, and formally dismissed from his ambassador's office, when he retired into private life at Sheen. Here he wrote an "Essay on Government" and part of his "Miscellanies." He was again ambassador to the States-General in 1674; and in 1679 he was appointed Secretary of State, but resigned in the following year. He now retired to his country-seat in Surrey, where he was often visited by Charles II, James II, and William III. As a statesman and man of the world, Temple is said to have been wanting in unselfish devotion, but in private he was respectable and decorous. He died at Moor Park in January, 1699.

Dr. Johnson once made the remark that "Sir William Temple was the first writer who gave cadence to English prose; before his time they were careless of arrangement." This may be taken as only comparatively true.

Sir William Temple has a place of his own among English writers, and will be studied for the purity and elegance of his English when greater thinkers, whose forms of expression are uncouth, are neglected. He is master of a style which is seen to most advantage in memoirs and essays of the lighter kind. This style he may almost be said to have originated. He seldom fails to gratify his reader, and he has occasional passages of great splendor and dignity. Sir James Mackintosh says of Temple, "in an age of extremes he was attached to liberty, and yet averse from endangering the public quiet." It is not altogether fanciful to say that the political and domestic character of Temple is reflected in his "Letters," "Essays," and "Memoirs." In an evil hour for his reputation as a critic, he lavished praise on the so-called "Letters of Philaris," and provoked a controversy forever memorable in literary annals. He was the patron of Swift, who has hardly done justice to his memory.

AGAINST EXCESSIVE GRIEF

THE honor I received by a letter from your ladyship [1] was too great and too sensible not to be acknowledged; but yet I doubted whether that occasion could bear me out in the confidence of giving your ladyship any further troubles of this kind, without as good an errand as my last. This I have reckoned upon a good while by another visit my sister and I had designed to my Lord Capell. How we came to have deferred it so long, I think we are neither of us like to tell you at this distance, though we make ourselves believe it could not be helped. Your ladyship at least has had the advantage of being thereby excused some time from this trouble, which I could no longer forbear, upon the sensible wounds that have so often of late been given your friends here by such desperate expressions in several of your letters concerning your humor, your health, and your life; in all which, if they are your friends, you must allow them to be extremely concerned. Perhaps none can be at heart more partial than I am to whatever touches your ladyship, nor more inclined to defend you upon this very occasion, how unjust and unkind soever you are to yourself. But when you go about to throw away your health, or your life, so great a remainder of your own family, and so great hopes of that into which you are entered, and all by a desperate melancholy, upon an accident past remedy, and to which all mortal race is perpetually subject. For God's sake, madam, give me leave to tell you, that what you do is not at all agreeable either with so good a Christian, or so reasonable and so great a person as your ladyship appears to the world in all other lights.

I know no duty in religion more generally agreed on, nor more justly required by God Almighty, than a perfect submission to His will in all things; nor do I think any disposition of

[1] Addressed to the Countess of Essex, January 29, 1674, on the death of her only daughter.

mind can either please Him more, or become us better, than that of being satisfied with all He gives, and contented with all He takes away. None I am sure can be of more honor to God, nor of more ease to ourselves: for if we consider Him as our Maker, we cannot contend with Him; if as our Father, we ought not to distrust Him; so that we may be confident, whatever He does is intended for our good, and whatever happens that we interpret otherwise, yet we can get nothing by repining, nor save anything by resisting.

But if it were fit for us to reason with God Almighty, and your ladyship's loss be acknowledged as great as it could have been to anyone alive; yet I doubt, you would have but ill grace to complain at the rate you have done, or rather as you do: for the first motions or passions, how violent soever, may be pardoned; and it is only the course of them which makes them inexcusable. In this world, madam, there is nothing perfectly good, and whatever is called so, is but either comparatively with other things of its kind, or else with the evil that is mingled in its composition; so he is a good man that is better than men commonly are, or in whom the good qualities are more than the bad: so in the course of life, his condition is esteemed good, which is better than that of most other men, or wherein the good circumstances are more than the ill. By this measure, I doubt, madam, your complaints ought to be turned into acknowledgments, and your friends would have cause to rejoice rather than condole with you; for the goods or blessings of life are usually esteemed to be birth, health, beauty, friends, children, honor, riches. Now when your ladyship has fairly considered how God Almighty has dealt with you in what He has given you of all these, you may be left to judge yourself how you have dealt with Him in your complaints for what He has taken away. But if you look about you, and consider other lives as well as your own, and what your lot is in comparison with those that have been drawn in the circle of your knowledge; if you think how few are born with honor, how many die without name or children, how little beauty we see, how few friends we hear of, how many diseases, and how much poverty there is in the world, you will fall down upon your knees, and instead of repining at one affliction, will admire so many blessings as you have received at the hand of God.

To put your ladyship in mind of what you are, and the advantages you have in all these points, would look like a design to flatter you: but this I may say, that we will pity you as much as you please, if you will tell us who they are that you think upon all circumstances you have reason to envy. Now if I had a master that gave me all I could ask, but thought fit to take one thing from me again, either because I used it ill, or gave myself so much over to it, as to neglect what I owed either to him or the rest of the world; or perhaps because he would show his power, and put me in mind from whom I held all the rest; would you think I had much reason to complain of hard usage, and never to remember any more what was left me, never to forget what was taken away?

It is true you have lost a child, and therein all that could be lost in a child of that age; but you have kept one child, and are likely to do so long; you have the assurance of another, and the hopes of many more. You have kept a husband great in employment, and in fortune, and (which is more) in the esteem of good men. You have kept your beauty and your health, unless you have destroyed them yourself, or discouraged them to stay with you by using them ill. You have friends that are as kind to you as you can wish or as you can give them leave to be by their fears of losing you, and being thereby so much the unhappier, the kinder they are to you. But you have honor and esteem from all that know you; or if ever it fails in any degree, it is only upon that point of your seeming to be fallen out with God and the whole world, and neither to care for yourself, or anything else, after what you have lost.

You will say perhaps *that* one thing was all to you, and your fondness of it made you indifferent to everything else. But this, I doubt, will be so far from justifying you, that it will prove to be your fault as well as your misfortune. God Almighty gave you all the blessings of life, and you set your heart wholly upon one, and despise or undervalue all the rest; is this His fault or yours? Nay, is it not to be very unthankful to Heaven, as well as very scornful to the rest of the world; is it not to say, because you have lost one thing God hath given you, you thank Him for nothing He has left, and care not what He takes away? Is it not to say, since that one thing is gone out of the world, there is nothing left in it which you

think can deserve your kindness or esteem? A friend makes me a feast, and sets all before me that his care or kindness could provide; but I set my heart upon one dish alone, and if that happen to be thrown down, I scorn all the rest; and though he sends for another of the same, yet I rise from the table in a rage, and say my friend is my enemy, and has done me the greatest wrong in the world; have I reason, madam, or good grace in what I do? Or would it become me better to eat of the rest that is before me, and think no more of what had happened, and could not be remedied?

All the precepts of Christianity agree to teach and command us to moderate our passions, to temper our affections towards all things below; to be thankful for the possession, and patient under the loss whenever He that gave it shall see fit to take away. Your extreme fondness was perhaps as displeasing to God before, as now your extreme affliction; and your loss may have been a punishment for your faults in the manner of enjoying what you had. It is at least pious to ascribe all the ill that befalls us to our own demerits rather than to injustice in God; and becomes us better to adore all the issues of His providence in the effects, than inquire into the causes. For submission is the only way of reasoning between a creature and its Maker; and contentment in His will is the greatest duty we can pretend to, and the best remedy we can apply to all our misfortunes.

But, madam, though religion were no party in your case, and that for so violent and injurious a grief you had nothing to answer to God, but only to the world and yourself; yet I very much doubt how you would be acquitted. We bring into the world with us a poor, needy, uncertain life, short at the longest, and unquiet at the best; all the imaginations of the witty and the wise have been perpetually busied to find out the ways how to revive it with pleasures, or relieve it with diversions; how to compose it with ease, and settle it with safety. To some of these ends have been employed the institutions of lawgivers, the reasonings of philosophers, the inventions of poets, the pains of laboring, and the extravagances of voluptuous men. All the world is perpetually at work about nothing else, but only that our poor mortal lives should pass the easier and happier for that little time we possess them, or else

end the better when we lose them. Upon this occasion riches came to be coveted, honors to be esteemed, friendship and love to be pursued, and virtues themselves to be admired in the world. Now, madam, is it not to bid defiance to all mankind, to condemn their universal opinions and designs, if instead of passing your life as well and easily, you resolve to pass it as ill and as miserably as you can? You grow insensible to the conveniences of riches, the delights of honor and praise, the charms of kindness or friendship, nay, to the observance or applause of virtues themselves; for who can you expect, in these excesses of passions, will allow you to show either temperance or fortitude, to be either prudent or just? And for your friends, I suppose, you reckon upon losing their kindness, when you have sufficiently convinced them, they can never hope for any of yours, since you have none left for yourself or anything else. You declare upon all occasions you are incapable of receiving any comfort or pleasure in anything that is left in this world; and I assure you, madam, none can ever love you, that can have no hopes ever to please you.

Among the several inquiries and endeavors after the happiness of life, the sensual men agree in pursuit of every pleasure they can start, without regarding the pains of the chase, the weariness when it ends, or how little the quarry is worth. The busy and ambitious fall into the more lasting pursuits of power and riches; the speculative men prefer tranquillity of mind, before the different motions of passion and appetite, or the common successions of desire and satiety, of pleasure and pain: but this may seem too dull a principle for the happiness of life, which is ever in motion: and passions are perhaps the stings, without which they say no honey is made; yet I think all sorts of men have ever agreed, they ought to be our servants, and not our masters; to give us some agitation for entertainment or exercise, but never to throw our reason out of its seat. Perhaps I would not always sit still, or would be sometimes on horseback; but I would never ride a horse that galls my flesh, or shakes my bones, or that runs away with me as he pleases, so as I can neither stop at a river or precipice. Better no passions at all, than have them too violent; or such alone, as instead of heightening our pleasures, afford us nothing but vexation and pain.

In all such losses as your ladyship's has been, there is something that common nature cannot be denied, there is a great deal that good-nature may be allowed; but all excessive and outrageous grief or lamentation for the dead, was accounted among the ancient Christians, to have something of heathenish; and among the civil nations of old, to have something of barbarous; and therefore it has been the care of the first to moderate it by their precepts, and the latter to restrain it by their law. The longest time that has been allowed to the forms of mourning by the custom of any country, and in any relation, has been but that of a year, in which space the body is commonly supposed to be mouldered away to earth, and to retain no more figure of what it was; but this has been given only to the loss of parents, of husband, or wife. On the other side, to children under age, nothing has been allowed; and I suppose with particular reason (the common ground of all general customs), perhaps because they die in innocence, and without having tasted the miseries of life, so as we are sure they are well when they leave us, and escape much ill that would in all appearance have befallen them if they had stayed longer with us. Besides, a parent may have twenty children, and so his mourning may run through all the best of his life, if his losses are frequent of that kind; and our kindness to children so young, is taken to proceed from common opinions, or fond imaginations, not friendship or esteem; and to be grounded upon entertainment, rather than use in the many offices of life: nor would it pass from any person besides your ladyship, to say you lost a companion and a friend at nine years old, though you lost one indeed, who gave the fairest hopes that could be of being both in time, and everything else that was estimable and good. But yet, that itself God only knows, considering the changes of humor and disposition, which are as great as those of feature and shape the first sixteen years of our lives, considering the chances of time, the infection of company, the snares of the world, and the passions of youth, so that the most excellent and agreeable creature of that tender age, and that seemed born under the happiest stars, might by the course of years and accidents, come to be the most miserable herself, and more trouble to her friends by living long, than she could have been by dying young.

Yet after all, madam, I think your loss so great, and some measure of your grief so deserved, that would all your passionate complaints, all the anguish of your heart do anything to retrieve it; could tears water the lovely plant, so as to make it grow again after once it is cut down; would sighs furnish new breath, or could it draw life and spirits from the wasting of yours—I am sure your friends would be so far from accusing your passion, that they would encourage it as much, and share it as deep as they could. But, alas! the eternal laws of the creation extinguish all such hopes, forbid all such designs; nature gives us many children and friends to take them away, but takes none away to give them us again. And this makes the excesses of grief to have been so universally condemned, as a thing unnatural, because so much in vain, whereas nature, they say, does nothing in vain; as a thing so unreasonable, because so contrary to our own designs; for we all design to be well and at ease, and by grief we make ourselves ill of imaginary wounds, and raise ourselves troubles most properly out of the dust, whilst our ravings and complaints are but like arrows shot up into the air, at no mark, and so to no purpose, but only to fall back upon our heads, and destroy ourselves, instead of recovering or revenging our friends.

Perhaps, madam, you will say this is your design, or if not, your desire; but I hope you are not yet so far gone, or so desperately bent. Your ladyship knows very well your life is not your own, but His that lent it to you to manage and preserve the best you could, and not to throw it away as if it came from some common hand. It belongs in a great measure to your country and your family; and therefore, by all human laws, as well as divine, self-murder has ever been agreed on as the greatest crime, and is punished here with the utmost shame, which is all that can be inflicted upon the dead. But is the crime much less to kill ourselves by a slow poison than by a sudden wound? Now, if we do it, and know we do it, by a long and a continual grief, can we think ourselves innocent? What great difference is there if we break our hearts or consume them; if we pierce them, or bruise them; since all determines in the same death, as all arises from the same despair? But what if it goes not so far? It is not, indeed, so bad as might be, but that does not excuse it from being very

ill. Though I do not kill my neighbor, is it no hurt to wound him, or to spoil him of the conveniences of life? The greatest crime is for a man to kill himself; is it a small one to wound himself by anguish of heart, by grief, or despair, to ruin his health, to shorten his age, to deprive himself of all the pleasures, or eases, or enjoyments of life?

Next to the mischiefs we do ourselves are those we do our children and our friends, as those who deserve best of us, or at least deserve no ill. The child you carry about you, what has that done that you should endeavor to deprive it of life almost as soon as you bestow it; or if, at the best, you suffer it to live to be born, yet by your ill usage of yourself, should so much impair the strength of its body and health, and perhaps the very temper of its mind, by giving it such an infusion of melancholy, as may serve to discolor the objects and disrelish the accidents it may meet with in the common train of life? But this is one you are not yet acquainted with. What will you say to another you are? Were it a small injury to my Lord Capell, to deprive him of a mother, from whose prudence and kindness he may justly expect the cares of his health and education, the forming of his body, and the cultivating of his mind; the seeds of honor and virtue, and thereby the true principles of a happy life. How has my Lord of Essex deserved that you should go about to lose him a wife he loves with so much passion, and, which is more, with so much reason; so great an honor and support to his family, so great a hope to his fortune, and comfort to his life? Are there so many left of your own great family that you should desire in a manner wholly to reduce it by suffering the greatest and almost last branch of it to wither away before its time? or is your country in this age so stored with great persons that you should envy it those we may justly expect from so noble a race?

Whilst I had any hopes your tears would ease you, or that your grief would consume itself by liberty and time, your ladyship knows very well I never once accused it, nor ever increased it, like many others, by the common formal ways of assuaging it, and this, I am sure, is the first office of this kind I ever went about to perform otherwise than in the most ordinary forms. I was in the hope what was so violent could

not be so long; but when I observed it to grow stronger with age, and increase like a stream the farther it ran; when I saw it draw out to so many unhappy consequences, and threaten no less than your child, your health, and your life, I could no longer forbear this endeavor, nor end it without begging of your ladyship, for God's sake and for your own, for your children's and your friends', for your country's and your family's, that you would no longer abandon yourself to so disconsolate a passion, but that you would at length awaken your piety, give way to your prudence, or at least rouse up the invincible spirit of the Percies, that never yet shrank at any disaster; that you would sometimes remember the great honors and fortunes of your family, not always the losses; cherish those veins of good humor that are sometimes so natural to you, and sear up those of ill that would make you so unnatural to your children and to yourself. But above all, that you would enter upon the cares of your health and your life, for your friends' sake at least, if not for your own.

OF HEROIC PLAYS

—

BY

JOHN DRYDEN

JOHN DRYDEN

1631—1700

John Dryden was born in 1631 at Aldwinkle in Northamptonshire. He received the rudiments of education at Tichmarsh in his native county. He was afterwards admitted King's scholar at Westminster, and under the celebrated Dr. Busby made rapid progress in classical learning. From Westminster he was elected, 1650, Scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge. He took his degree in 1654, and three years later finally left his university for London, where he at once entered on the career of a literary man, which he pursued to the very end of his life. He occupied in his relations with men of genius, of rank, and political influence as high a station in the very foremost circles as literary reputation could gain for its owner. Dryden attached himself to the court party in the reigns of Charles II and James II, in the latter of which he left the Church of England for the Church of Rome. At the Revolution he was dismissed from the place of Poet Laureate, which he had held since 1670, as the successor of Davenant, and lived in comparative obscurity, though he was still patronized by several of the nobility. By the loss of this office he became again almost wholly dependent on literary labor for bread. Dryden was married to Lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter of the Earl of Berkshire, and had several children, none however of whom long survived him. He died in 1700, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Dryden was the most popular and (putting aside Milton, who belongs to an earlier period) most eminent poet of the latter half of the seventeenth century. His works consist of plays, satires, translations, and occasional poems. Of these, the plays are much the most voluminous, and in their time were doubtless considered the most important; but later generations have bestowed very little attention on them. They, however, gave occasion to several of those compositions which have made him distinguished as a prose writer, critical prefaces, explaining the nature of the works they introduce, and vindications, rebutting the attacks of literary rivals or political opponents. These prose pieces have had very warm admirers, including Gray and Charles James Fox; and are characterized by Johnson in words that may be worth quoting: "Criticism, either didactic or defensive, occupies almost all his prose, except those pages which he has devoted to his patrons: but none of his prefaces were ever thought tedious. They have not the formality of a settled style, in which the first half of the sentence betrays the other. The clauses are never balanced, nor the periods modelled; every word seems to drop by chance, though it falls into its proper place. Nothing is cold or languid; the whole is airy, animated, and vigorous; what is little is gay; what is great is splendid. He may be thought to mention himself too frequently; but while he forces himself upon our esteem, we cannot refuse him to stand high in his own. Everything is excused by the play of images and the sprightliness of expression. Though all is easy, nothing is feeble; though all seems careless, there is nothing harsh; and though, since his earlier works were written several centuries have passed, they contain nothing uncouth or obsolete.

OF HEROIC PLAYS

WHETHER heroic verse ought to be admitted into serious plays is not now to be disputed:[1] it is already in possession of the stage; and I dare confidently affirm that very few tragedies, in this age, shall be received without it. All the arguments which are formed against it can amount to no more than this—that it is not so near conversation as prose; and therefore not so natural. But it is very clear to all who understand poetry that serious plays ought not to imitate conversation too nearly. If nothing were to be raised above that level the foundation of poetry would be destroyed. And if you once admit of a latitude, that thoughts may be exalted, and that images and actions may be raised above the life, and described in measure without rhyme, that leads you insensibly from your own principles to mine: you are already so far onward of your way that you have forsaken the imitation of ordinary converse; you are gone beyond it; and to continue where you are is to lodge in the open field, betwixt two inns. You have lost that which you call natural, and have not acquired the last perfection of art. But it was only custom which cozened us so long: we thought, because Shakespeare and Fletcher went no farther, that there the pillars of poetry were to be erected: that, because they excellently described passion without rhyme, therefore rhyme was not capable of describing it. But time has now convinced most men of that error. It is indeed so difficult to write verse that the adversaries of it have a good plea against many who undertake that task without being formed by art or nature for it.

[1] This essay was originally prefixed to Dryden's "Conquest of Granada," which was first published in 1672. That play, however, appears to have been first acted in the year 1670; for the author in the epilogue to the First Part tells the audience that he had not yet attained his fortieth year. He was born in August, 1631. In the preface to "The Mock Astrologer," which appeared in 1671, as we have already seen, he mentions "The Conquest of Granada" as having been previously acted, though not then published.

Yet even they who have written worst in it would have written worse without it: they have cozened many with their sound who never took the pains to examine their sense. In fine, they have succeeded; though it is true they have more dishonored rhyme by their good success than they could have done by their ill. But I am willing to let fall this argument: it is free for every man to write, or not to write, in verse, as he judges it to be or not to be his talent; or as he imagines the audience will receive it.

For heroic plays (in which only I have used it without the mixture of prose) the first light we had of them on the English theatre was from the late Sir William D'Avenant. It being forbidden him in the rebellious times to act tragedies and comedies, because they contained some matter of scandal to those good people, who could more easily dispossess their lawful sovereign than endure a wanton jest, he was forced to turn his thoughts another way, and to introduce the examples of moral virtue, writ in verse, and performed in recitative music.[2] The original of this music, and of the scenes [3] which adorned his work, he had from the Italian operas; but he heightened his characters (as I may probably imagine) from the example of Corneille and some French poets. In this condition did this part of poetry remain at his Majesty's return; when growing bolder, as being now owned by a public authority, he reviewed his "Siege of Rhodes," and caused it to be acted as a just drama. But as few men have the happiness to begin and finish any new project, so neither did he live to make his design perfect: there wanted the fulness of a plot and the variety of characters to form it as it ought; and perhaps something might have been added to the beauty of the style. All which he would have performed with more exactness had he pleased to have given us another work of the same nature. For myself and others who come after him, we are bound, with all veneration to his memory, to acknowledge what advantage we received from that excellent groundwork which he laid; and since it is an easy thing to add to what already is invented, we

[2] The first edition of Sir William D'Avenant's "Siege of Rhodes" was published in quarto in 1656, with the following title: "The Siege of Rhodes, made a representation by the art of prospective in scenes; and the story sung in recitative music.—At the back part of Rutland House, in the upper end of Aldersgate-street, London."

[3] In the time of Shakespeare, and long afterwards, our English theatres were unfurnished with scenes.

ought all of us, without envy to him, or partiality to ourselves, to yield him the precedence in it.

Having done him this justice, as my guide, I may do myself so much, as to give an account of what I have performed after him. I observed then, as I said, what was wanting to the perfection of his "Siege of Rhodes;" which was design and variety of characters. And in the midst of this consideration, by mere accident I opened the next book that lay by me, which was an Ariosto in Italian; and the very first two lines of that poem gave me light to all I could desire:

"Le donne, i cavalier, l'arme, gli amori,
Le cortesie, l'audaci imprese io canto," &c.

For the very next reflection which I made, was this—that an heroic play ought to be an imitation, in little, of an heroic poem; and consequently, that love and valor ought to be the subject of it. Both these Sir William D'Avenant had begun to shadow; but it was so, as first discoverers draw their maps, with head-lands, and promontories, and some few outlines of somewhat taken at a distance, and which the designer saw not clearly. The common drama obliged him to a plot well-formed and pleasant, or as the ancients called it, one entire and great action. But this he afforded not himself in a story, which he neither filled with persons, nor beautified with characters, nor varied with accidents. The laws of an heroic poem did not dispense with those of the other, but raised them to a greater height; and indulged him a farther liberty of fancy, and of drawing all things as far above the ordinary proportion of the stage as that is beyond the common words and actions of human life; and therefore, in the scanting of his images, and design, he complied not enough with the greatness and majesty of an heroic poem.

I am sorry I cannot discover my opinion of this kind of writing without dissenting much from his, whose memory I love and honor. But I will do it with the same respect to him, as if he were now alive, and overlooking my paper while I write. His judgment of an heroic poem was this: "That it ought to be dressed in a more familiar and easy shape; more fitted to the common actions and passions of human life; and, in short, more like a glass of nature, shewing us ourselves in

our ordinary habits, and figuring a more practicable virtue to us, than was done by the ancients or moderns." Thus, he takes the image of an heroic poem from the drama, or stage-poetry; and accordingly intended to divide it into five books, representing the same number of acts, and every book into several cantos, imitating the scenes which compose our acts.

But this, I think, is rather a play in narration, as I may call it, than an heroic poem. If at least you will not prefer the opinion of a single man to the practice of the most excellent authors both of ancient and latter ages. I am no admirer of quotations; but you shall hear, if you please, one of the ancients delivering his judgment on this question; it is Petronius Arbiter, the most elegant, and one of the most judicious authors of the Latin tongue; who, after he had given many admirable rules for the structure and beauties of an epic poem, concludes all in these following words: "*Non enim res gestæ versibus comprehendendæ sunt, quod longe melius historici faciunt: sed, per ambages, deorumque ministeria, præcipitandus est liber spiritus, ut potius furentis animi vaticinatio appareat, quam religiosæ orationis, sub testibus, fides.*" In which sentence, and his own "Essay of a Poem" which immediately he gives you, it is thought he taxes Lucan, who followed too much the truth of history; crowded sentences together; was too full of points; and too often offered at somewhat which had more of the sting of an epigram than of the dignity and state of an heroic poem. Lucan used not much the help of his heathen deities: there was neither the ministry of the gods, nor the precipitation of the soul, nor the fury of a prophet (of which my author speaks) in his "Pharsalia:" he treats you more like a philosopher than a poet; and instructs you in verse, with what he had been taught by his uncle Seneca in prose. In one word, he walks soberly a-foot, when he might fly. Yet Lucan is not always this religious historian. The oracle of Appius and the witchcraft of Erictho will somewhat atone for him, who was, indeed, bound up by an ill-chosen and known argument, to follow truth with great exactness. For my part, I am of opinion that neither Homer, Vergil, Statius, Ariosto, Tasso, nor our English Spenser, could have formed their poems half so beautiful without those gods and spirits and those enthusiastic parts of poetry which compose the most

noble parts of all their writings. And I will ask any man who loves heroic poetry (for I will not dispute their tastes who do not) if the ghost of Polydorus in Vergil, the enchanted wood in Tasso, and the bower of bliss in Spenser (which he borrows from that admirable Italian), could have been omitted without taking from their works some of the greatest beauties in them? And if any man object the improbabilities of a spirit appearing, or of a palace raised by magic, I boldly answer him that an heroic poet is not tied to a bare representation of what is true, or exceeding probable, but that he may let himself loose to visionary objects, and to the representation of such things as depending not on sense, and therefore not to be comprehended by knowledge, may give him a freer scope for imagination. It is enough, that in all ages and religions the greatest part of mankind have believed the power of magic, and that there are spirits or spectres which have appeared. This, I say, is foundation enough for poetry: and I dare farther affirm that the whole doctrine of separated beings, whether those spirits are incorporeal substances (which Mr. Hobbes, with some reason, thinks to imply a contradiction), or that they are a thinner and more aerial sort of bodies (as some of the fathers have conjectured) may better be explicated by poets, than by philosophers or divines. For their speculations on this subject are wholly poetical; they have only their fancy for their guide; and that, being sharper in an excellent poet than it is likely it should be in a phlegmatic, heavy gown-man, will see farther in its own empire, and produce more satisfactory notions on those dark and doubtful problems.

Some men think they have raised a great argument against the use of spectres and magic in heroic poetry by saying—they are unnatural: but whether they or I believe there are such things is not material; it is enough that, for aught we know, they may be in nature; and whatever is or may be is not properly unnatural. Neither am I much concerned at Mr. Cowley's verses before Gondibert; though his authority is almost sacred to me. It is true he has resembled the old epic poetry to a fantastic fairy-land; but he has contradicted himself by his own example; for he has himself made use of angels and visions in his "Davideis," as well as Tasso in his "Godfrey."

What I have written on this subject will not be thought digression by the reader if he please to remember what I said in the beginning of this Essay—that I have modelled my heroic plays by the rules of an heroic poem. And if that be the most noble, the most pleasant, and the most instructive way of writing in verse, and, withal, the highest pattern of human life, as all poets have agreed, I shall need no other argument to justify my choice in this imitation. One advantage the drama has above the other, namely, that it represents to view what the poem only does relate; and "*Segnius irritant animum demissa per aurem, quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus,*" as Horace tells us.

To those who object my frequent use of drums and trumpets, and my representations of battles—I answer, I introduced them not on the English stage: Shakespeare used them frequently; and, though Jonson shows no battle in his "Catiline," yet you hear from behind the scenes the sounding of trumpets and the shouts of fighting armies. But I add farther; that these warlike instruments, and, even their presentations of fighting on the stage, are no more than necessary to produce the effects of an heroic play; that is, to raise the imagination of the audience and to persuade them, for the time, that what they behold on the theatre is really performed. The poet is, then, to endeavor an absolute dominion over the minds of the spectators; for though our fancy will contribute to its own deceit, yet a writer ought to help its operation. And that the Red Bull has formerly done the same is no more an argument against our practice than it would be for a physician to forbear an approved medicine because a mountebank has used it with success.

Thus I have given a short account of heroic plays. I might now, with the usual eagerness of an author, make a particular defence of this. But the common opinion (how unjust soever) has been so much to my advantage that I have reason to be satisfied; and to suffer with patience all that can be urged against it.

For, otherwise, what can be more easy for me than to defend the character of Almanzor, which is one great exception that is made against the play? It is said that Almanzor is no

perfect pattern of heroic virtue; that he is a contemner of kings; and that he is made to perform impossibilities.

I must, therefore avow, in the first place, from whence I took the character. The first image I had of him was from the Achilles of Homer; the next from Tasso's Rinaldo, who was a copy of the former; and the third from the Artaban of Monsieur Calpranede, who has imitated both. The original of these, Achilles, is taken by Homer for his hero; and is described by him as one, who in strength and courage surpassed the rest of the Grecian army, but, withal, of so fiery a temper, so impatient of an injury, even from his king and general, that, when his mistress was to be forced from him by the command of Agamemnon, he not only disobeyed it, but returned him an answer full of contumely, and in the most opprobious terms he could imagine. They are Homer's words which follow, and I have cited but some few amongst a multitude:

Οἰνοβαρές, κυνὸς ὄμματ' ἔχων, κραδίην δ' ἐλάφοιο.—I. *a.* v. 225.
Δημοβόρος βασιλεύς, &c.—I. *a.* v. 231.

Nay, he proceeded so far in his insolence, as to draw out his sword, with intention to kill him:

Ἕλκετο δ' ἐκ κολεοῖο μέγα ξίφος.—I. *a.* v. 194.

and, if Minerva had not appeared, and held his hand, he had executed his design; and it was all she could do to dissuade him from it. The event was that he left the army and would fight no more. Agamemnon gives his character thus to Nestor:

Ἀλλ' ὅδ' ἀνὴρ ἐθέλει περι πάντων ἔμμεναι ἄλλων,
Πάντων μὲν κρατέειν ἐθέλει, πᾶντεσσι δ' ἀνάσσειν.—I. *a.* v. 287, 288.

and Horace gives the same description of him in his "Art of Poetry":

——"*Honoratum si fortè reponis Achillem,*
Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer,
Jura neget sibi nata, nihil non arroget armis."

Tasso's chief character, Rinaldo, was a man of the same temper; for when he had slain Gernando, in his heat of passion, he not only refused to be judged by Godfrey, his general, but threatened, that if he came to seize him, he would right himself by arms upon him; witness these following lines of Tasso:

> *"Venga egli, o mandi, io terrò fermo il piede;*
> *Giudici fian tra noi la sorte, e l'arme:*
> *Ferra tragedia vuol che s' appresenti,*
> *Per lor diporto, alle nemiche genti."*

You see how little these great authors did esteem the point of honor, so much magnified by the French, and so ridiculously aped by us. They made their heroes men of honor; but so as not to divest them quite of human passions and frailties: they content themselves to show you what men of great spirits would certainly do when they were provoked, not what they were obliged to do by the strict rules of moral virtue. For my own part, I declare myself for Homer and Tasso; and am more in love with Achilles and Rinaldo than with Cyrus and Oroondates. I shall never subject my characters to the French standard, where love and honor are to be weighed by drachms and scruples; yet, where I have designed the patterns of exact virtues, such as in this play are the parts of Almahide, of Ozmyn, and Benzayda, I may safely challenge the best of theirs.

But Almanzor is taxed with changing sides: and what tie has he on him to the contrary? He is not born their subject whom he serves; and he is injured by them to a very high degree. He threatens them, and speaks insolently of sovereign power; but so do Achilles and Rinaldo, who were subjects and soldiers to Agamemnon and Godfrey of Bouillon. He talks extravagantly in his passion; but, if I would take the pains to quote an hundred passages of Ben Jonson's "Cethegus," I could easily show you that the rhodomontades of Almanzor are neither so irrational as his, nor so impossible to be put in execution; for Cethegus threatens to destroy nature, and to raise a new one out of it; to kill all the Senate for his part of the action; to look Cato dead; and a thousand other things as extravagant, he says, but performs not one action in the play.

But none of the former calumnies will stick: and therefore, it is at last charged upon me that Almanzor does all things; or if you will have an absurd accusation, in their nonsense who make it, that he performs impossibilities: they say, that being a stranger, he appeases two fighting factions, when the authority of their lawful sovereign could not. This is, indeed, the most improbable of all his actions; but, it is far from being impossible. Their king had made himself contemptible to his people—as the "History of Granada" tells us; and Almanzor, though a stranger, yet was already known to them by his gallantry in the *juego de toros*, his engagement on the weaker side, and more especially by the character of his person and brave actions, given by Abdalla just before. And, after all, the greatness of the enterprise consisted only in the daring; for he had the king's guards to second him; but we have read both of Cæsar, and many other generals, who have not only calmed a mutiny with a word, but have presented themselves single before an army of their enemies; which, upon sight of them, has revolted from their own leaders, and come over to their trenches. In the rest of Almanzor's actions, you see him for the most part victorious; but the same fortune has constantly attended many heroes who were not imaginary. Yet, you see it no inheritance to him; for, in the first part, he is made a prisoner, and, in the last, defeated, and not able to preserve the city from being taken. If the history of the late Duke of Guise be true, he hazarded more, and performed not less in Naples than Almanzor is feigned to have done in Granada.[4]

I have been too tedious in this apology; but to make some satisfaction, I will leave the rest of my play exposed to the critics, without defence.

[4] "The two parts of 'The Conquest of Granada,'" says Dr. Johnson, "are written with a seeming determination to glut the public with dramatic wonders; to exhibit, in its highest elevation, a theatrical meteor of incredible love and impossible valor, and to leave no room for a wilder flight to the extravagance of posterity. All the rays of romantic heat, whether amorous or warlike, glow in Almanzor by a kind of concentration. He is above all laws; he is exempt from all restraints; he ranges the world at will, and governs wherever he appears. He fights without inquiring the cause, and loves in spite of the obligations of justice, of rejection by his mistress, and of prohibition from the dead. Yet the scenes are for the most part delightful; they exhibit a kind of illustrious depravity and majestic madness: such as, if it is sometimes despised, is often reverenced, and in which the ridiculous is often mingled with the astonishing."

The concernment of it is wholly passed from me, and ought to be in them who have been favorable to it, and are somewhat obliged to defend their own opinions. That there are errors in it, I deny not;

"*Ast opere in tanto fas est obrepere somnum.*" [5]

But I have already swept the stakes; and, with the common good fortune of prosperous gamesters, can be content to sit quietly—to hear my fortune cursed by some, and my faults arraigned by others; and to suffer both without reply.

[5] Horace's line is, "*Verum opere in longo fas est obrepere somnum.*"

OF PRACTICE AND HABITS

—

OF PRINCIPLES

—

OF PREJUDICES

—

OF OBSERVATION

—

OF READING

—

SOME THOUGHTS CONCERNING EDUCATION

—

BY

JOHN LOCKE

JOHN LOCKE

1632—1704

John Locke was born at Wrington, in Somersetshire, in 1632. He was educated at Westminster, from which he was removed to a studentship at Christ Church, Oxford, where he was greatly distinguished no less by industry than by superior ability. The writings of Descartes appear early to have excited his interest in the study of philosophy. After having taken the degree of M.A. in 1658 he applied himself to the study of medicine, but his health prevented his pursuing that profession. In 1666 he formed the acquaintance of Lord Ashley, afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury, to whose fortunes he was attached for many years, sharing his prosperity and his disgrace, and for a time acting first as tutor to his son, and then to his grandson, the future author of the "Characteristics." Locke commenced his famous "Essay Concerning Human Understanding" in 1670, but it was not till 1687 that he was able to complete it. It attracted great and immediate attention, not only in philosophical circles, but in the wider world of thoughtful readers. It was followed in the next few years by the "Letters on Toleration" and the "Treatises on Government" and "Thoughts on Education," as well as by several minor essays in vindication of opinions advanced in his larger works. He suffered severely from asthma during the later part of his life, and lived at Oates in the retirement of Sir Francis Masham's house for the last fourteen years. He died in 1704 in the seventy-third year of his age.

Locke is one of the most prominent of our philosophical and political authors; there is probably no writer on philosophy who has produced such a broad and solid effect on the mind of the English people. Few have turned their attention to metaphysical inquiries without reading his "Essay Concerning Human Understanding," which has lent to such inquiries whatever popularity they possess. D'Alembert says that Locke created the science of metaphysics in somewhat the same way as Newton created that of physics; and his inquiry into the origin, development, and combination of our thoughts justly entitle him to be called the founder of psychology in England. There is scarcely any English writer whose works bear such an impress of originality, power, patient sagacity, and good sense. The style of Locke has fine qualities, but is too incorrect to be taken as a model of English language. It is homely, racy, and masculine, though wanting in philosophical precision and sometimes too idiomatic and colloquial, or too indefinite and figurative for the abstruse subjects with which he has to deal. The six essays that follow have been carefully selected. The essay entitled "Some Thoughts Concerning Education" has many valuable suggestions, and is generally considered to fill an important place in the literature on that subject.

OF PRACTICE AND HABITS

WE are born with faculties and powers capable almost of anything, such at least as would carry us further than can be easily imagined; but it is only the exercise of those powers which gives us ability and skill in anything, and leads us towards perfection.

A middle-aged ploughman will scarce ever be brought to the carriage and language of a gentleman, though his body be as well proportioned, and his joints as supple, and his natural parts not any way inferior. The legs of a dancing-master, and the fingers of a musician, fall as it were naturally, without thought or pains, into regular and admirable motions. Bid them change their parts, and they will in vain endeavor to produce like motions in the members not used to them, and it will require length of time and long practice to attain but some degrees of a like ability. What incredible and astonishing actions do we find rope-dancers and tumblers bring their bodies to!—not but that sundry in almost all manual arts are as wonderful; but I name those which the world takes notice of for such, because, on that very account, they give money to see them. All these admired motions, beyond the reach, and almost the conception, of unpractised spectators, are nothing but the mere effects of use and industry in men whose bodies have nothing peculiar in them from those of the amazed lookers-on.

As it is in the body, so it is in the mind; practice makes it what it is: and most, even of those excellencies which are looked on as natural endowments, will be found, when examined into more narrowly, to be the product of exercise, and to be raised to that pitch only by repeated actions. Some men are remarked for pleasantness in raillery; others for apologues and apposite diverting stories. This is apt to be taken for the effect of pure nature, and that the rather, because it is not got by rules; and those who excel in either of them never purposely set themselves to the study of it as an art to be learned.

But yet it is true that at first some lucky hit which took with somebody, and gained him commendation, encouraged him to try again, inclined his thoughts and endeavors that way, till at last he insensibly got a facility in it without perceiving how; and that is attributed wholly to nature, which was much more the effect of use and practice. I do not deny that natural disposition may often give the first rise to it; but that never carries a man far without use and exercise, and it is practice alone that brings the powers of the mind, as well as those of the body, to their perfection. Many a good poetic vein is buried under a trade, and never produces anything, for want of improvement. We see the ways of discourse and reasoning are very different, even concerning the same matter at court and in the university. And he that will go but from Westminster Hall to the Exchange will find a different genius and turn in their ways of talking: and yet one cannot think that all whose lot fell in the city were born with different parts from those who were bred at the university or inns of court.

To what purpose all this, but to show that the difference so observable in men's understandings and parts does not arise so much from the natural faculties as acquired habits? He would be laughed at that should go about to make a fine dancer out of a country hedger at past fifty. And he will not have much better success who shall endeavor at that age to make a man reason well, or speak handsomely, who has never been used to it, though you should lay before him a collection of all the best precepts of logic or oratory. Nobody is made anything by hearing of rules, or laying them up in his memory; practice must settle the habit of doing, without reflecting on the rule: and you may as well hope to make a good painter or musician extempore by a lecture and instruction in the arts of music and painting, as a coherent thinker, or strict reasoner, by a set of rules showing him wherein right reasoning consists.

This being so, that defects and weakness in men's understandings, as well as other faculties, come from a want of a right use of their own minds, I am apt to think the fault is generally mislaid upon nature, and there is often a complaint of want of parts, when the fault lies in want of a due improvement of them. We see men frequently dexterous and sharp enough in making a bargain, who, if you reason with them about matters of religion, appear perfectly stupid.

OF PRINCIPLES

THERE is another fault that stops or misleads men in their knowledge, which I have also spoken something of, but yet is necessary to mention here again, that we may examine it to the bottom, and see the root is springs from, and that is the custom of taking up with principles that are not self-evident, and very often not so much as true. It is not unusual to see men rest their opinions upon foundations that have no more certainty nor solidity than the propositions built on them, and embraced for their sake. Such foundations are these, and the like, namely: The founders or leaders of my party are good men, and therefore their tenets are true; it is the opinion of a sect that is erroneous, therefore it is false: it hath been long received in the world, therefore it is true; or, it is new, and therefore false.

These, and many the like, which are by no means the measures of truth and falsehood, the generality of men make the standards by which they accustom their understanding to judge. And thus, they falling into a habit of determining of truth and falsehood by such wrong measures, it is no wonder they should embrace error for certainty, and be very positive in things they have no ground for.

There is not any who pretends to the least reason, but when any of these his false maxims are brought to the test, must acknowledge them to be fallible, and such as he will not allow in those that differ from him; and yet, after he is convinced of this, you shall see him go on in the use of them, and the very next occasion that offers, argue again upon the same grounds. Would one not be ready to think that men are willing to impose upon themselves, and mislead their own understanding, who conduct them by such wrong measures, even after they see they cannot be relied on? But yet, they will not

appear so blamable as may be thought at first sight; for I think there are a great many that argue thus in earnest, and do it not to impose on themselves or others. They are persuaded of what they say, and think there is weight in it, though, in a like case, they have been convinced there is none; but men would be intolerable to themselves, and contemptible to others, if they should embrace opinions without any ground, and hold what they could give no manner of reason for. True or false, solid or sandy, the mind must have some foundation to rest itself upon; and, as I have remarked in another place, it no sooner entertains any proposition, but it presently hastens to some hypothesis to bottom it on: till then it is unquiet and unsettled. So much do our own very tempers dispose us to a right use of our understandings, if we would follow as we should the inclinations of our nature.

In some matters of concernment, especially those of religion, men are not permitted to be always wavering and uncertain, they must embrace and profess some tenets or other; and it would be a shame, nay, a contradiction too heavy for anyone's mind to lie constantly under, for him to pretend seriously to be persuaded of the truth of any religion, and yet not to be able to give any reason of his belief, or to say anything for his preference of this to any other opinion; and, therefore, they must make use of some principles or other, and those can be no other than such as they have and can manage; and to say they are not in earnest persuaded by them, and do not rest upon those they make use of, is contrary to experience, and to allege that they are not misled when we complain they are.

If this be so, it will be urged why, then, do they not rather make use of sure and unquestionable principles, rather than rest on such grounds as may deceive them, and will, as is visible, serve to support error as well as truth?

To this I answer, the reason why they do not make use of better and surer principles is because they cannot: but this inability proceeds not from want of natural parts (for those few whose case that is, are to be excused), but for want of use and exercise. Few men are from their youth accustomed to strict reasoning, and to trace the dependence of any truth in a long train of consequences to its remote principles, and to observe its connection; and he that by frequent practice has not been

used to this employment of his understanding, it is no more wonder that he should not, when he is grown into years, be able to bring his mind to it, than that he should not be on a sudden able to grave or design, dance on the ropes, or write a good hand, who has never practised either of them.

Nay, the most of men are so wholly strangers to this, that they do not so much as perceive their want of it; they despatch the ordinary business of their callings by rote, as we say, as they have learned it; and if at any time they miss success, they impute it to anything rather than want of thought or skill; that, they conclude (because they know no better), they have in perfection: or, if there be any subject that interest or fancy has recommended to their thoughts, their reasoning about it is still after their own fashion, be it better or worse; it serves their turns, and is the best they are acquainted with; and, therefore, when they are led by it into mistakes, and their business succeeds accordingly, they impute it to any cross accident or default of others, rather than to their own want of understanding; that is what nobody discovers or complains of in himself. Whatsoever made his business to miscarry, it was not want of right thought or judgment in himself: he sees no such defect in himself, but is satisfied that he carries on his designs well enough by his own reasoning; or, at least, should have done, had it not been for unlucky traverses not in his power. Thus, being content with this short and very imperfect use of his understanding, he never troubles himself to seek out methods of improving his mind, and lives all his life without any notion of close reasoning, in a continued connection of a long train of consequences from sure foundations, such as is requisite for the making out and clearing most of the speculative truths most men own to believe and are most concerned in. Not to mention here what I shall have occasion to insist on by and by more fully, namely, that, in many cases, it is not one series of consequences will serve the turn, but many different and opposite deductions must be examined and laid together, before a man can come to make a right judgment of the point in question. What, then, can be expected from men that neither see the want of any such kind of reasoning as this; nor, if they do, know they how to set about it, or could perform it? You may as well set a countryman, who scarce knows the figures, and

never casts up a sum of three particulars, to state a merchant's long account, and find the true balance of it.

What, then, should be done in the case? I answer, we should always remember what I said above, that the faculties of our souls are improved and made useful to us, just after the same manner as our bodies are. Would you have a man write or paint, dance or fence well, or perform any other manual operation dexterously and with ease, let him have never so much vigor and activity, suppleness and address, naturally, yet nobody expects this from him unless he has been used to it, and has employed time and pains in fashioning and forming his hand, or outward parts, to these motions. Just so it is in the mind—would you have a man reason well, you must use him to it betimes, exercise his mind in observing the connection of ideas, and following them in train. Nothing does this better than mathematics, which, therefore, I think, should be taught all those who have the time and opportunity; not so much to make them mathematicians, as to make them reasonable creatures; for though we all call ourselves so, because we are born to it, if we please, yet we may truly say, nature gives us but the seeds of it; we are born to be, if we please, rational creatures, but it is use and exercise only that make us so, and we are indeed so no further than industry and application have carried us. And, therefore, in ways of reasoning which men have not been used to, he that will observe the conclusions they take up must be satisfied they are not at all rational.

This has been the less taken notice of because everyone in his private affairs uses some sort of reasoning or other, enough to denominate him reasonable. But the mistake is that he that is found reasonable in one thing is concluded to be so in all; and to think or say otherwise is thought so unjust an affront, and so senseless a censure, that nobody ventures to do it. It looks like the degradation of a man below the dignity of his nature. It is true that he that reasons well in any one thing has a mind naturally capable of reasoning well in others, and to the same degree of strength and clearness, and possibly much greater, had his understanding been so employed. But it is as true that he who can reason well to-day about one sort of matters cannot at all reason to-day about others, though perhaps a year hence he may. But wherever a man's rational faculty

fails him, and will not serve him to reason, there we cannot say he is rational, how capable soever he may be by time and exercise to become so.

Try in men of low and mean education, who have never elevated their thoughts above the spade and the plough, nor looked beyond the ordinary drudgery of a day laborer. Take the thoughts of such a one, used for many years to one tract, out of that narrow compass he has been all his life confined to, you will find him no more capable of reasoning than almost a perfect natural. Some one or two rules, on which their conclusions immediately depend, you will find, in most men, have governed all their thoughts; these, true or false, have been the maxims they have been guided by—take these from them, and they are perfectly at a loss; their compass and pole-star then are gone, and their understanding is perfectly at a nonplus: and, therefore, they either immediately return to their old maxims again as the foundations of all truth to them, notwithstanding all that can be said to show their weakness; or if they give them up to their reasons, they with them give up all truth and further inquiry, and think there is no such thing as certainty. For if you would enlarge their thoughts, and settle them upon more remote and surer principles, they either cannot easily apprehend them, or, if they can, know not what use to make of them; for long deductions from remote principles is what they have not been used to, and cannot manage.

What then! can grown men never be improved or enlarged in their understandings? I say not so; but this I think I may say, that it will not be done without industry and application, which will require more time and pains than grown men, settled in their course of life, will allow to it, and therefore very seldom is done. And this very capacity of attaining it by use and exercise only brings us back to that which I laid down before, that it is only practice that improves our minds as well as bodies, and we must expect nothing from our understandings any further than they are perfected by habits.

The Americans are not at all born with worse understandings than the Europeans, though we see none of them have such reaches in the arts and sciences. And among the children of a poor countryman the lucky chance of education and getting into the world gives one infinitely the superiority in parts

over the rest, who, continuing at home, had continued also just of the same size with his brethren.

He that has to do with young scholars, especially in mathematics, may perceive how their minds open by degrees, and how it is exercise alone that opens them. Sometimes they will stick a long time at a part of a demonstration, not for want of will or application, but really for want of perceiving the connection of two ideas, that, to one whose understanding is more exercised, is as visible as anything can be. The same would be with a grown man beginning to study mathematics—the understanding, for want of use, often sticks in a very plain way —and he himself that is so puzzled, when he comes to see the connection, wonders what it was he stuck at in a case so plain.

OF PREJUDICES

EVERYONE is forward to complain of the prejudices that mislead other men or parties, as if he were free, and had none of his own. This being objected on all sides, it is agreed that it is a fault and a hinderance to knowledge. What, now, is the cure? No other but this—that every man should let alone others' prejudices, and examine his own. Nobody is convinced of his by the accusation of another: he recriminates by the same rule, and is clear. The only way to remove this great cause of ignorance and error out of the world is for everyone impartially to examine himself. If others will not deal fairly with their own minds, does that make my errors truths, or ought it to make me in love with them, and willing to impose on myself? If others love cataracts on their eyes, should that hinder me from couching of mine as soon as I could? Everyone declares against blindness, and yet who almost is not fond of that which dims his sight, and keeps the clear light out of his mind, which should lead him into truth and knowledge? False and doubtful positions, relied upon as unquestionable maxims, keep those in the dark from truth who build on them. Such are usually the prejudices imbibed from education, party, reverence, fashion, interest, etc. This is the mote which everyone sees in his brother's eye, but never regards the beam in his own. For who is there, almost, that is ever brought fairly to examine his own principles, and see whether they are such as will bear the trial? But yet this should be one of the first things everyone should set about, and be scrupulous in, who would rightly conduct his understanding in the search of truth and knowledge.

To those who are willing to get rid of this great hinderance of knowledge (for to such only I write)—to those who would shake off this great and dangerous impostor prejudice, who dresses up falsehood in the likeness of truth, and so dexterously

hoodwinks men's minds, as to keep them in the dark, with a belief that they are more in the light than any that do not see with their eyes, I shall offer this one mark whereby prejudice may be known. He that is strongly of any opinion must suppose (unless he be self-condemned) that his persuasion is built upon good grounds, and that his assent is no greater than what the evidence of the truth he holds forces him to; and that they are arguments, and not inclination of fancy, that make him so confident and positive in his tenets. Now if, after all his profession, he cannot bear any opposition to his opinion—if he cannot so much as give a patient hearing, much less examine and weigh the arguments on the other side—does he not plainly confess it is prejudice governs him? And it is not the evidence of truth, but some lazy anticipation, some beloved presumption, that he desires to rest undisturbed in. For if what he holds be as he gives out, well fenced with evidence, and he sees it to be true, what need he fear to put it to the proof? If his opinion be settled upon a firm foundation, if the arguments that support it, and have obtained his assent, be clear, good, and convincing, why should he be shy to have it tried whether they be proof or not? He whose assent goes beyond his evidence owes this excess of his adherence only to prejudice, and does in effect own it when he refuses to hear what is offered against it; declaring thereby that it is not evidence he seeks, but the quiet enjoyment of the opinion he is fond of, with a forward condemnation of all that may stand in opposition to it, unheard and unexamined.

OF OBSERVATION

PARTICULAR matters of fact are the undoubted foundations on which our civil and natural knowledge is built: the benefit the understanding makes of them is to draw from them conclusions which may be as standing rules of knowledge, and consequently of practice. The mind often makes not that benefit it should of the information it receives from the accounts of civil or natural historians, in being too forward, or too slow, in making observations on the particular facts recorded in them.

There are those who are very assiduous in reading, and yet do not much advance their knowledge by it. They are delighted with the stories that are told, and perhaps can tell them again, for they make all they read nothing but history to themselves; but not reflecting on it, not making to themselves observations from what they read, they are very little improved by all that crowd of particulars that either pass through, or lodge themselves in, their understandings. They dream on in a constant course of reading and cramming themselves, but, not digesting anything, it produces nothing but a heap of crudities.

If their memories retain well, one may say they have the materials of knowledge; but, like those for building, they are of no advantage if there be no other use made of them but to let them lie heaped up together. Opposite to these, there are others who lose the improvement they should make of matters of fact by a quite contrary conduct. They are apt to draw general conclusions and raise axioms from every particular they meet with. These make as little true benefit of history as the other, nay, being of forward and active spirits, receive more harm by it; it being of worse consequence to steer one's thoughts by a wrong rule than to have none at all: error doing to busy men much more harm than ignorance to the slow and

sluggish. Between these, those seem to do best who, taking material and useful hints, sometimes from single matters of fact, carry them in their minds to be judged of, by what they shall find in history to confirm or reverse these imperfect observations; which may be established into rules fit to be relied on, when they are justified by a sufficient and wary induction of particulars. He that makes no such reflections on what he reads only loads his mind with a rhapsody of tales, fit in winter nights for the entertainment of others; and he that will improve every matter of fact into a maxim will abound in contrary observations that can be of no other use but to perplex and pudder him if he compares them; or else to misguide him, if he gives himself up to the authority of that, which for its novelty, or for some other fancy, best pleases him.

OF READING

THIS is that which I think great readers are apt to be mistaken in. Those who have read of everything are thought to understand everything too; but it is not always so. Reading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge: it is thinking makes what we read ours. We are of the ruminating kind, and it is not enough to cram ourselves with a great load of collections; unless we chew them over again, they will not give us strength and nourishment. There are indeed in some writers visible instances of deep thought, close and acute reasoning, and ideas well pursued. The light these would give would be of great use if their readers would observe and imitate them: all the rest at best are but particulars fit to be turned into knowledge; but that can be done only by our own meditation, and examining the reach, force, and coherence of what is said; and then, as far as we apprehend and see the connection of ideas, so far it is ours; without that, it is but so much loose matter floating in our brain. The memory may be stored, but the judgment is little better, and the stock of knowledge not increased, by being able to repeat what others have said, or produce the arguments we have found in them. Such a knowledge as this is but a knowledge by hearsay, and the ostentation of it is at best but talking by rote, and very often upon weak and wrong principles. For all that is to be found in books is not built upon true foundations, nor always rightly deduced from the principles it is pretended to be built on. Such an *examen* as is requisite to discover that, every reader's mind is not forward to make; especially in those who have given themselves up to a party, and only hunt for what they can scrape together that may favor and support the tenets of it. Such men wilfully exclude themselves from truth, and from all true benefit to be received by reading. Others, of more indifferency, often want attention and industry. The mind is back-

ward in itself to be at the pains to trace every argument to its original, and to see upon what basis it stands, and how firmly; but yet it is this that gives so much the advantage to one man more than another in reading. The mind should, by severe rules, be tied down to this, at first, uneasy task; use and exercise will give it facility. So that those who are accustomed to it, readily, as it were with one cast of the eye, take a view of the argument, and presently, in most cases, see where it bottoms. Those who have got this faculty, one may say, have got the true key of books, and the clew to lead them through the mizmaze of variety of opinions and authors to truth and certainty. This young beginners should be entered in, and shown the use of, that they might profit by their reading. Those who are strangers to it will be apt to think it too great a clog in the way of men's studies; and they will suspect they shall make but small progress, if, in the books they read, they must stand to examine and unravel every argument, and follow it step by step up to its original.

I answer, this is a good objection, and ought to weigh with those whose reading is designed for much talk and little knowledge, and I have nothing to say to it. But I am here inquiring into the conduct of the understanding in its progress towards knowledge; and to those who aim at that, I may say, that he who fair and softly goes steadily forward in a course that points right, will sooner be at his journey's end, than he that runs after everyone he meets, though he gallop all day full speed.

To which, let me add that this way of thinking on, and profiting by, what we read, will be a clog and rub to anyone only in the beginning; when custom and exercise have made it familiar, it will be despatched, in most occasions, without resting or interruption in the course of our reading. The motions and views of a mind exercised that way are wonderfully quick; and a man used to such sort of reflections sees as much at one glimpse as would require a long discourse to lay before another, and make out an entire and gradual deduction. Besides that, when the first difficulties are over, the delight and sensible advantage it brings mightily encourage and enliven the mind in reading, which, without this, is very improperly called study.

SOME THOUGHTS CONCERNING EDUCATION

A SOUND mind in a sound body is a short but full description of a happy state in this world. He that has these two has little more to wish for, and he that wants either of them will be but little the better for anything else. Men's happiness or misery is most part of their own making. He whose mind directs not wisely will never take the right away, and he whose body is crazy and feeble will never be able to advance in it. I confess there are some men's constitutions of body and mind so vigorous and well framed by nature that they need not much assistance from others, but by the strength of their natural genius, they are from their cradles carried towards what is excellent; and by the privilege of their happy constitutions, are able to do wonders. But examples of this kind are but few, and I think I may say, that of all the men we meet with, nine parts of ten are what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education. It is that which makes the great difference in mankind. The little or almost insensible impressions on our tender infancies have very important and lasting consequences. And there it is, as in the fountains of some rivers, where a gentle application of the hand turns the flexible waters into channels, that make them take quite contrary courses; and by this little direction, given them at first in the source, they receive different tendencies, and arrive at last at very remote and distant places.

Those that intend ever to govern their children should begin it whilst they are very little, and look that they perfectly comply with the will of their parents. Would you have your son obedient to you when past a child, be sure then to establish the authority of a father as soon as he is capable of submission, and can understand in whose power he is. If you would have him stand in awe of you, imprint it in his infancy; and as he ap-

proaches more to a man, admit him nearer to your familiarity; so shall you have him your obedient subject (as is fit) whilst he is a child, and your affectionate friend when he is a man. For methinks they mightily misplace the treatment due to their children, who are indulgent and familiar when they are little, but severe to them, and keep them at a distance when they are grown up. For liberty and indulgence can do no good to children; their want of judgment makes them stand in need of restraint and discipline; and, on the contrary, imperiousness and severity is but an ill way of treating men who have reason of their own to guide them, unless you have a mind to make your children, when grown up, weary of you, and secretly to say within yourselves, "When will you die, father?"

The child's natural genius and constitution must be considered in a right education. We must not hope wholly to change their original tempers, nor make the gay pensive and grave, nor the melancholy sportive, without spoiling them. God has stamped certain characters upon men's minds, which, like their shapes, may perhaps be a little mended, but can hardly be totally altered and transformed into the contrary. He, therefore, that is about children should well study their natures and aptitudes, and see by often trials what turn they easily take, and what becomes them, observe what their native stock is, how it may be improved, and what it is fit for. He should consider what they want, whether they be capable of having it wrought into them by industry, and incorporated there by practice, and whether it be worth while to endeavor it. For in many cases all that we can do, or should aim at, is to make the best of what nature has given, to prevent the vices and faults to which such a constitution is most inclined, and give it all the advantages it is capable of. Everyone's natural genius should be carried as far as it could; but to attempt the putting another upon him will be but labor in vain; and what is so plastered on will at best fit but untowardly, and have always hanging to it the ungracefulness of constraint and affectation.

Of all the ways whereby children are to be instructed and their manners formed, the plainest, easiest, and most efficacious is to set before their eyes the examples of those things you would have them do or avoid, which, when they are pointed out to them, in the practice of persons within their knowledge, with

some reflections on their beauty and unbecomingness, are of more force to draw or deter their imitation, than any discourses which can be made to them. Virtues and vices can by no words be so plainly set before their understandings as the actions of other men will show them, when you direct their observation, and bid them view this or that good or bad quality in their practice. And the beauty or uncomeliness of many things, in good and ill breeding, will be better learned, and make deeper impressions on them, in the examples of others, than from any rules or instructions which can be given about them. This is a method to be used, not only whilst they are young, but to be continued even as long as they shall be under another's tuition or conduct; nay, I know not whether it be not the best way to be used by a father, as long as he should think fit, on any occasion, to reform anything he wishes mended in his son; nothing sinking so gently, and so deep, into men's minds, as example. And what ill they either overlook or indulge in themselves they cannot but dislike, and be ashamed of, when it is set before them in another.

The great work of a governor is to fashion the carriage, and form the mind; to settle in his pupil good habits, and the principles of virtue and wisdom; to give him by little and little a view of mankind, and work him into a love and imitation of what is excellent and praiseworthy; and in the prosecution of it, to give him vigor, activity, and industry. The studies which he sets him upon are but as it were the exercises of his faculties and employment of his time, to keep him from sauntering and idleness, to teach him application, and accustom him to take pains, and to give him some little taste of what his own industry must perfect.

Latin I look upon as absolutely necessary to a gentleman; and indeed custom, which prevails over everything, has made it so much a part of education that even those children are whipped to it, and made spend many hours of their precious time uneasily in Latin, who, after they are once gone from school, are never to have more to do with it as long as they live. Can there be anything more ridiculous than that a father should waste his own money and his son's time in setting him to learn the Roman language, when at the same time he designs him for a trade, wherein he, having no use for Latin, fails not to

forget that little which he brought from school, and which it is ten to one he abhors for the ill-usage it procured him?

The great skill of a teacher is to get and keep the attention of his scholar; whilst he has that, he is sure to advance as fast as the learner's abilities will carry him; and without that, all his bustle and pudder will be to little or no purpose. To attain this, he should make the child comprehend (as much as may be) the usefulness of what he teaches him, and let him see, by what he has learned, that he can do something which he could not before; something which gives him some power and real advantage above others who are ignorant of it. To this he should add sweetness in all his instructions, and, by a certain tenderness in his whole carriage, make the child sensible that he loves him, and designs nothing but his good, the only way to beget love in the child, which will make him hearken to his lessons, and relish what he teaches him. Nothing but obstinacy should meet with any imperiousness, or rough usage. All other faults should be corrected with a gentle hand; and kind, engaging words will work better and more effectually upon a willing mind, and even prevent a good deal of that perverseness which rough and imperious usage often produces in well-disposed and generous minds. It is true obstinacy and wilful neglects must be mastered, even though it costs blows to do it. But I am apt to think perverseness in the pupils is often the effect of frowardness in the tutor; and that most children would seldom have deserved blows, if needless and misapplied roughness had not taught them ill-nature, and given them an aversion for their teacher, and all that comes from him.

To write and speak correctly gives a grace, and gains a favorable attention to what one has to say. And since it is English that an English gentleman will have constant use of, that is the language he should chiefly cultivate, and wherein most care should be taken to polish and perfect his style. To speak or write better Latin than English may make a man be talked of, but he will find it more to his purpose to express himself well in his own tongue that he uses every moment, than to have the vain commendation of others for a very insignificant quality. This I find universally neglected, nor no care taken anywhere to improve young men in their own language, that they may thoroughly understand and be masters of it. If any-

one among us have a facility or purity more than ordinary in his mother tongue, it is owing to chance, or his genius, or anything, rather than to his education, or any care of his teacher. To mind what English his pupil speaks or writes is below the dignity of one bred up amongst Greek and Latin, though he have but little of them himself. These are the learned languages, fit only for learned men to meddle with and teach; English is the language of the illiterate vulgar.

THE INSTABILITY OF HUMAN GLORY

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DESCRIPTION OF A QUACK DOCTOR

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BY

DANIEL DEFOE

DANIEL DEFOE

1661—1731

Defoe was an irrepressible journalist, for in enterprise, energy, and rapidity of execution he appears to have equalled the nimble-witted newsgatherers of to-day. Not only was he a journalist in spirit, but also in fact, as he was connected for many years with the political newspapers that sprang into existence near the close of the seventeenth and at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Defoe was born in 1661, and before he was twenty-one he had written a book; at the age of twenty-three he took up arms as a follower of the Duke of Monmouth; a few years later he was an ardent advocate of the Revolution; in 1692 he was declared a bankrupt, and was forced to flee from his creditors. In the gaps of leisure from his more pressing business he was an author and a journalist, and the vehemence of his political articles frequently made him the object of prosecution. It was with such stirring side-issues that young Defoe played his part in the literary arena. Debarred from the aristocratic community of letters because of his lack of a classical education, encountering failure after failure in business, harassed by political enemies, he faced his difficulties with stoical courage and went his busy way, untroubled and unabashed. From him emanated such literary work as might be expected from a man of strong realistic genius, educated as a tradesman, and placed in his peculiar circumstances. He certainly did not have posterity in his mind's eye when he wrote his two hundred and ten volumes of fiction, biography, and essays. He was a writer for the hour, and for the pecuniary reward that his work brought. All his work that is preserved shows his strong, limited, realistic, and vivid imagination. He had the power of wrapping the cloak of realism around a bare fiction as it has been possessed by no other writer, before or since. Millions of people still believe his "Adventures of Robinson Crusoe" to be the actual experiences of a shipwrecked sailor. His intensely vital, simple, and serious "History of the Plague of 1666 in London" remains to this day the best and most accurate account. Despite the obvious defects, the crudities of style, the almost mechanical efforts to gain attention that mar all of Defoe's work, there can certainly be no question that he possessed an originality of a very high order that has never been successfully imitated. The essays given here are from his journalistic writings. Defoe died in 1731.

THE INSTABILITY OF HUMAN GLORY

SIR, I have employed myself of late pretty much in the study of history,[1] and have been reading the stories of the great men of past ages, Alexander the Great, Julius Cæsar, the great Augustus, and many more down, down, down, to the still greater Louis XIV, and even to the still greatest John, Duke of Marlborough.[2] In my way I met with Tamerlane[3] the Scythian, Tomornbejus[4] the Egyptian, Solyman[5] the Magnificent, and others of the Mahometan or Ottoman race; and after all the great things they have done I find it said of them all, one after another, AND THEN HE DIED, all dead, dead, dead! *hic jacet* is the finishing part of their history. Some lie in the bed of honor, and some in honor's truckle-bed; some were bravely slain in battle on the field of honor, some in the storm of a counterscarp and died in the ditch of honor; some here, some there;—the bones of the bold and the brave, the cowardly and the base, the hero and the scoundrel, are heaped up together;—there they lie in oblivion, and under the ruins of the earth, undistinguished from one another, nay, even from the common earth.

> "Huddled in dirt the blust'ring engine lies,
> That was so great, and thought himself so wise."

How many hundreds of thousands of the bravest fellows then in the world lie on heaps in the ground, whose bones are to this day ploughed up by the rustics, or dug up by the laborer,

[1] This essay appeared on July 21, 1722, in "The Original Weekly Journal and Saturday's Post," started by Applebee on October 2, 1714. From 1720 to 1726 Defoe contributed weekly articles in the form of "letters introductory." These letters—admittedly the prototypes of "leading articles"—were first introduced by Defoe in the sixty-eighth number of Mist's "Journal," 1718.

[2] The duke died five weeks before the date of Defoe's essay.

[3] Timour (1336-1405) made war on the whole world in support of what he regarded as the true Mahometan faith. He defeated the Ottoman Sultan, and died when preparing to invade China.

[4] Tumanbeg or Tumanbai, the last Mameluke Sultan, was defeated and put to death by Selim in 1517.

[5] Suleiman the Magnificent, the Lawgiver (1490-1566), was the greatest constructor of the Ottoman power. The capture of Rhodes, the invasion of Hungary, and the siege of Vienna were his most famous exploits.

and the earth their more noble vital parts are converted to has been perhaps applied to the meanest uses!

How have we screened the ashes of heroes to make our mortar, and mingled the remains of a Roman general to make a hog-sty! Where are the ashes of a Cæsar, and the remains of a Pompey, a Scipio, or a Hannibal? All are vanished, they and their very monuments are mouldered into earth, their dust is lost, and their place knows them no more. They live only in the immortal writings of their historians and poets, the renowned flatterers of the age they lived in, and who have made us think of the persons, not as they really were, but as they were pleased to represent them.

As the greatest men, so even the longest-lived. The Methusalems of the antediluvian world—the accounts of them all end with the same: Methusalem lived nine hundred sixty and nine years and begat sons and daughters—and what then? AND THEN HE DIED.

> "Death like an overflowing stream
> Sweeps us away; our life's a dream."

We are now solemnizing the obsequies of the great Marlborough; all his victories, all his glories, his great projected schemes of war, his uninterrupted series of conquests, which are called his, as if he alone had fought and conquered by his arm, what so many men obtained for him with their blood—all is ended, where other men, and, indeed, where all men ended: HE IS DEAD.

Not all his immense wealth, the spoils and trophies of his enemies, the bounty of his grateful mistress, and the treasure amassed in war and peace, not all that mighty bulk of gold—which some suggest is such, and so great, as I care not to mention—could either give him life, or continue it one moment, but he is dead; and some say the great treasure he was possessed of here had one strange particular quality attending it, which might have been very dissatisfying to him if he had considered much on it, namely, that he could not carry much of it with him.

We have now nothing left us of this great man that we can converse with but his monument and his history. He is now numbered among things passed. The funeral as well as the battles of the Duke of Marlborough are like to adorn our houses

in sculpture as things equally gay and to be looked on with pleasure. Such is the end of human glory, and so little is the world able to do for the greatest men that come into it, and for the greatest merit those men can arrive to.

What then is the work of life? What the business of great men, that pass the stage of the world in seeming triumph as these men, we call heroes, have done? Is it to grow great in the mouth of fame and take up many pages in history? Alas! that is no more than making a tale for the reading of posterity till it turns into fable and romance. Is it to furnish subject to the poets, and live in their immortal rhymes, as they call them? That is, in short, no more than to be hereafter turned into ballad and song and be sung by old women to quiet children, or at the corner of a street to gather crowds in aid of the pickpocket and the poor. Or is their business rather to add virtue and piety to their glory, which alone will pass them into eternity and make them truly immortal? What is glory without virtue? A great man without religion is no more than a great beast without a soul. What is honor without merit? And what can be called true merit but that which makes a person be a good man as well as a great man?

If we believe in a future state of life, a place for the rewards of good men and for the punishment of the haters of virtue, how few of heroes and famous men crowd in among the last! How few crowned heads wear the crowns of immortal felicity!

Let no man envy the great and glorious men, as we call them! Could we see them now, how many of them would move our pity rather than call for our congratulations! These few thoughts, sir, I send to prepare your readers' minds when they go to see the magnificent funeral of the late Duke of Marlborough.

DESCRIPTION OF A QUACK DOCTOR

MR. MIST, passing occasionally the other day through a little village, at some distance from town, I was entertained with the view of a very handsome equipage moving towards me.[1] The gravity of the gentleman who sat in it, and the eagerness wherewith the coachman drove along, engaged my whole attention; and I immediately concluded that it could be nothing less than some minister of state, who was posting this way upon some very important affair. They were now got about the middle of the place, when making a full stand, the footman, deserting his station behind and making up abreast of his master, gave us a very fine blast with a trumpet. I was surprised to see a skip[2] transformed so speedily into a trumpeter, and began to wonder what should be the meaning of such an unusual phenomenon; when the coachman, jumping from his box, laying by his whip, and slipping off his great coat, in an instant rose up a complete merry-andrew. My surprise was now heightened, and though honest pickle[3] with a world of grimace and gesticulation endeavored to move my gayety, I began to be very fearful where the metamorphosis might end. I looked very earnestly first at the horse and then at the wheels, and expected every minute to have seen them take their turn in the farce, and laying aside their present appearances assume other shapes. By this time the gentleman, who had hitherto appeared wonderfully sedate and composed, began to throw off his disguise; and having pocketed all his former modesty and demureness, and flushed his forehead with all the impudence of a thorough-paced quack, I immediately discovered him to be a very eminent and learned mountebank.

[1] This essay appeared on December 5, 1719, in Nathaniel Mist's "Weekly Journal or Saturday's Post," started on December 15, 1716. On March 29, 1718, Defoe contributed the first leading article. The paper ran until 1728, when it passed into the hands of Fog. Mist was a Jacobite, and a "vendor of Scandal and Sedition," and in January, 1728, "took the opportunity of slinking away in a mist."

[2] Lackey.

[3] A harlequin in old comedy. The fuller form of the word is "pickle-herring."

This discovery raised my curiosity as much as it abated my surprise, so that being very desirous to hear what new proposal the doctor had to make, or what new *arcanum* in physic he had found out, I quitted my former station and joined myself to the crowd that encompassed him. After a short preamble, he began to open the design of his embassy, setting forth at large the great affection which he bore in particular to the people of that place; amplifying on his own merits and qualifications, specifying great numbers of cures which he had wrought on incurable distempers, expatiating on the extreme danger of being without his physic, and offering health and immortality to sale for the price of a tester.

You'd have burst your sides, Mr. Mist, had you but heard the foolish allusions, quaint expressions, and inconsistent metaphors, which fell from the mouth of this eloquent declaimer. For my part I should have wondered where he could have raked up nonsense enough to furnish out such a wordy harangue, but that I am told he has studied the "Flying Post" [4] with a great deal of application, and that most of the silly things in his speech are borrowed from that excellent author. Sometimes he'd creep in the most vulgar phrases imaginable, by and by he'd soar out of sight and traverse the spacious realms of fustian and bombast. He was, indeed, very sparing of his Latin and Greek, as (God knows) having a very slender stock of those commodities; but then, for hard words and terms, which neither he, nor you, nor I, nor anybody else understand, he poured them out in such abundance that you'd have sworn he had been rehearsing some of the occult philosophy of Agrippa [5] or Rosicrusius, or reading a lecture out of Cabala.

After the doctor had given such ample indications of the greatest humanity, skill, and erudition, who d'ye think would be so incredulous as not to believe him, or so uncourteous as to refuse to purchase one of his packets? Lest any of us, however, should be too tenacious of our money to part with it on these considerations, he had one other motive which did not fail to do the business; this was by persuading us that there were the

[4] This is obviously a thrust at Defoe's enemy, George Ridpath, the writer of the "Flying Post." Defoe contributed to another paper of the same name, hence Ridpath's scornful allusion to a "Sham Flying Post."

"To dulness Ridpath is as dear as Mist."—"Dunciad," I. 208.

[5] Henry Cornelius Agrippa (1486, Cologne) was a famous alchemist, author of "*De Occulta Philosophia*," etc.

seeds of some malignant distemper lurking in every one of our bodies, and that there was nothing in nature could save us but some one or other of his medicines. He threatened us with death in case of refusal, and assured us with a prophetic air that without his physic every mother's son of us would be in our graves by that day twelve-month. The poor people were infinitely terrified with the imminent danger they found themselves under, but were as much pleased to find how easy it was to be evaded; so that, without more ado, every man bought his packet, and turned the doctor adrift to pursue further adventures.

The scene being now removed, I was at leisure to reflect on what had passed, and could really have either cry'd or laugh'd very heartily at what I had seen. The arrogance of the doctor and the silliness of his patients were each of them ridiculous enough to have set a person of more gravity than myself a-laughing; but then to consider the tragical issue to which these things tended, and the fatal effect so many murthering medicines might have on several of His Majesty's good subjects, would have made the merriest buffoon alive serious. I have not often observed a more hale, robust crowd of people than that which encircled this doughty doctor; methinks one might have read health in their very faces, and there was not a countenance among them which did not give the lie to the doctor's suggestions. Could but one see a little into futurity, and observe the condition they will be in a few months hence, what an alteration would one find! How many of those brawny youths are already puking in chimney corners? And how many rosy complexioned girls are by this time reduced to the paleness of a cockney?

I propose in a little time to make a second journey to this place in order to see how the doctor's physic has operated. By searching the parish register and comparing the number of funerals made weekly before the doctor's visit with those which have followed, it will be easy to form an estimate of the havoc which this itinerant man-slayer made in the space of two hours. I shall then proceed to compute the number of quacks [1] in the three kingdoms, from which it will be no hard matter to deter-

[1] *Cf.* "Tatler," 240, and "Spectator," 572. The latter by Zachary Pearce is largely similar to Defoe's essay. Defoe had reason to know about the subject, as his "Review" was filled with quack advertisements.

mine the number of people carried off *per annum* by the whole fraternity. Lastly, I shall calculate the loss which the government sustains by the death of every subject; from all of which the immense damages accruing to His Majesty will evidently appear, and the public will be fully convinced of the truth of what I had heretofore asserted, viz. that the quacks contribute more towards keeping us poor than all our national debts, and that to suppress the former would be an infallible means of redeeming the latter. The whole scheme shall be drawn up in due form and presented to the Parliament in the ensuing session, and that august assembly, I don't doubt, will pay all regard thereto, which the importance of the subject and the weight of my argument shall require.

Methinks the course of justice, which has hitherto obtained among us, is chargeable with great absurdities. Petty villains are hanged or transported, while great ones are suffered to pass *impune*. A man cannot take a purse upon the highway, or cut a single throat, but he must presently be called to answer for it at the Old Bailey, and perhaps to suffer for it at Tyburn; and yet, here are wretches suffered to commit murthers by wholesale, and to plunder, not only private persons and pockets, but even the King and the Exchequer, without having any questions asked! Pray, Mr. Mist, what were gibbets, gallows, and whipping-posts made for?

But to return to Doctor Thornhill. I have had the curiosity to examine several of his medicines in a reverberatory, reducing compounds into their simples by a chemical analysis, and have constantly found a considerable proportion of some poisonous plant or mineral in every one of them. Arsenic, wolfsbane, mercury, and hemlock are *sine quibus non*, and he could no more make up a medicament without some of these than remove a mountain. Accordingly as they are variously mixed and disposed among other drugs, he gives them various names, calling them pills, boluses, electuaries, etc. His pills I would prescribe as a *succedaneum* to a halter, so that such persons as are weary of this troublesome world and would willingly quit it for a better, but are too squeamish to take up with that queer old-fashioned recipe called hanging, may have their business done as securely and more decently by some of these excellent pills. His bolus, too, is very good in its kind; I have made experi-

ments with it on several animals, and find that it poisons to a miracle. A moderate dose of it has perfectly silenced a bawling dog that used to disturb my morning slumbers, and a like quantity of it has quieted several other snarling curs in my neighborhood. And then, if you be troubled with rats, Mr. Mist, there the doctor's electuary is an infallible remedy, as I myself have experienced. I have effectually cleared my house of those troublesome animals by disposing little packets of it in the places they frequent, and do recommend it to you and your readers as the most powerful ratsbane in the world. It would be needless to enumerate all the virtues of the doctor's several medicines, but I dare affirm that what the ancients fabulously reported of Pandora's box is strictly true of the doctor's packet, and that it contains in it the seeds and principles of all diseases.

I must ask your pardon, Mr. Mist, for being so grave on so ludicrous a subject and spending so many words on an empty quack. Mr. Mist, Your humble servant PHILYGEIA.

ON STYLE

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THE VINDICATION OF ISAAC BICKERSTAFF

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BY

JONATHAN SWIFT

JONATHAN SWIFT

1667—1745

Jonathan Swift, born in 1667, was the son of an English gentleman settled in Ireland; he began life as secretary to Sir William Temple (1689—1699). After that statesman's death he obtained some small preferment in Ireland; but in 1710 came back to England, and for some years supported Harley and Bolingbroke, the heads of the Tory party, by a series of political pamphlets. With the accession of George I, the Tory Ministry was irretrievably ruined, and Swift was compelled to return to Ireland, to the Deanery of St. Patrick, the only reward he had received for his services. The rest of his life was spent in what he regarded as banishment, and was further embittered by his unhappy relations with two ladies, Esther Johnson and Hester Vanhomrigh, the Stella and Vanessa of his journals and his verse. To the former, whom he had first known in the house of Sir William Temple, in which she was brought up, he was united for many years in marriage, but the tie was never acknowledged during his lifetime, and was thus the cause of much suffering if also of much happiness to both. With the latter he formed a friendship of the most ardent kind, which the lady desired should lead to marriage, and she died broken-hearted on discovering the fact that he was already legally bound to another. Later in life, disease of the brain came on, and he died mad in 1745.

There is no greater master of satire than Swift. He thought clearly, wrote a singularly pure English, and could make every sentence an epigram, without impairing the continuous flow of his argument. Two of his best-known works have an allegorical character. The "Tale of a Tub" is directed against religious sects, and was written with such license of illustration that Queen Anne would never permit the author to obtain the preferment he coveted in England. In "Gulliver's Travels" the satire is rather against abuses of government and the pleasant vices of society. In the latter part of this, as in several of his minor pieces, he is at times very coarse. This fault grew upon him in later life, perhaps partly in connection with a diseased brain, and has caused his writings to be regarded with suspicion. Yet, judged by the standard of his better works, Swift is a moralist of high stamp. He attacked the sceptics of his day with scathing irony. He was the first man who had the heart to feel for the oppressed Irish peasantry, and the courage to denounce the injustice of English misrule. His "Drapier's Letters" form an epoch in constitutional history; and the peaceful struggle for Irish independence dates from them. The "Journal to Stella" has passages of infinite tenderness. There have been more faultless and purer-minded men than Swift; but few have seen more clearly where wrong lay, or have attacked it more fearlessly.

The prose works of Swift are among the best specimens we possess of a thorough English style, as may be seen in the two essays selected. The essay "On Style" was contributed to "The Tatler."

ON STYLE

THE following letter has laid before me many great and manifest evils in the world of letters, which I had overlooked; but they open to me a very busy scene, and it will require no small care and application to amend errors which are become so universal. The affection of politeness is exposed in this epistle with a great deal of wit and discernment; so that whatever discourses I may fall into hereafter upon the subjects the writer treats of, I shall at present lay the matter before the world, without the least alteration from the words of my correspondent:

"To Isaac Bickerstaff, Esquire—Sir:

"There are some abuses among us of great consequence, the reformation of which is properly your province; though, as far as I have been conversant in your papers, you have not yet considered them. These are the deplorable ignorance that for some years hath reigned among our English writers, the great depravity of our taste, and the continual corruption of our style. I say nothing here of those who handle particular sciences, divinity, law, physic, and the like; I mean the traders in history, politics, and the *belles-lettres*, together with those by whom books are not translated, but, as the common expressions are, 'done' out of French, Latin, or other language, and made English. I cannot but observe to you that until of late years a Grub-street book was always bound in sheepskin, with suitable print and paper, the price never above a shilling, and taken off wholly by common tradesmen or country pedlars; but now they appear in all sizes and shapes, and in all places. They are handed about from lapfuls in every coffee-house to persons of quality; are shown in Westminster-hall and the Court of Requests. You may see them gilt, and in royal paper of five or six hundred pages, and rated accordingly. I would

engage to furnish you with a catalogue of English books, published within the compass of seven years past, which at the first hand would cost you £100, wherein you shall not be able to find ten lines together of common grammar or common-sense.

"These two evils, ignorance and want of taste, have produced a third; I mean the continual corruption of our English tongue, which, without some timely remedy, will suffer more by the false refinements of twenty years past than it hath been improved in the foregoing hundred. And this is what I design chiefly to enlarge upon, leaving the former evils to your animadversion.

"But instead of giving you a list of the late refinements crept into our language, I here send you the copy of a letter I received, some time ago, from a most accomplished person in this way of writing; upon which I shall make some remarks. It is in these terms:

"'SIR: I *cou'd n't* get the things you sent for all *about town* —I *thot* to *ha* come down myself, and then *I'd h' brot 'um;* but I *ha'nt don't,* and I believe I *can't do 't,* that's *pozz*—Tom begins to *gi 'mself* airs, because *he 's* going with the *plenipo's*— 'T is said the *French* king will *bamboozl us agen,* which causes many speculations. The *Jacks* and others of that *kidney* are very *uppish* and *alert upon 't,* as you may see by their *phizz's*— Will Hazard has got the *hipps,* having lost *to the tune of* five *hundr'd* pound, *tho'* he understands play very well, *no body better.* He has *promis't* me upon *rep,* to leave off play; but you know 't is a weakness *he's* too apt to *give in to, tho'* he has as much wit as any man, *no body more.* He has lain *incog* ever since—The *mob's* very quiet with us now—I believe you *thot I banter'd* you in my last, like a *country put*—I *shan't* leave town this month, etc.'

"This letter is in every point an admirable pattern of the present polite way of writing; nor is it of less authority for being an epistle. You may gather every flower in it, with a thousand more of equal sweetness, from the books, pamphlets, and single papers offered us every day in the coffee-houses: and these are the beauties introduced to supply the want of wit, sense, humor, and learning, which formerly were looked upon as qualifications for a writer. If a man of wit, who died

forty years ago, were to rise from the grave on purpose, how would he be able to read this letter? and after he had got through that difficulty, how would he be able to understand it? The first thing that strikes your eye, is the breaks at the end of almost every sentence; of which I know not the use, only that it is a refinement, and very frequently practised. Then you will observe the abbreviations and elisions, by which consonants of most obdurate sound are joined together, without one softening vowel to intervene; and all this only to make one syllable of two, directly contrary to the example of the Greek and Romans, altogether of the Gothic strain, and a natural tendency towards relapsing into barbarity, which delights in monosyllables, and uniting of mute consonants, as it is observable in all the Northern languages. And this is still more visible in the next refinement, which consists in pronouncing the first syllable in a word that has many, and dismissing the rest, such as *phizz, hipps, mob, pozz, rep,* and many more, when we are already overloaded with monosyllables, which are the disgrace of our language. Thus we cram one syllable, and cut off the rest, as the owl fattened her mice after she had bit off their legs to prevent them from running away; and if ours be the same reason for maiming our words, it will certainly answer the end; for I am sure no other nation will desire to borrow them. Some words are hitherto but fairly split, and therefore only in their way to perfection, as *incog* and *plenipo:* but in a short time it is to be hoped they will be further docked to *inc* and *plen.* This reflection has made me of late years very impatient for a peace, which I believe would save the lives of many brave words, as well as men. The war has introduced abundance of polysyllables,[1] which will never be able to live many more campaigns: *speculations, operations, preliminaries, ambassadors, pallisadoes, communication, circumvallation, battalions:* as numerous as they are, if they attack us too frequently in our coffee-houses, we shall certainly put them to flight, and cut off the rear.

"The third refinement observable in the letter I send you consists in the choice of certain words,[2] invented by some pretty

[1] Several of those cited by Swift are used by Shakespeare, Milton, and Dryden.

[2] "Banter," "bamboozle," and "put" are of uncertain origin. "Kidney" is used in the same sense by Shakespeare, "Merry Wives of Windsor," act iii. sc. 5.

fellows, such as *banter, bamboozle, country put,* and *kidney,* as it is there applied; some of which are now struggling for the vogue, and others are in possession of it. I have done my utmost for some years past to stop the progress of *mob* and *banter,* but have been plainly borne down by numbers, and betrayed by those who promised to assist me.

"In the last place, you are to take notice of certain choice phrases scattered through the letter, some of them tolerable enough, until they were worn to rags by servile imitators. You might easily find them though they were not in a different print, and therefore I need not disturb them.

"These are the false refinements in our style which you ought to correct: first, by argument and fair means; but if these fail, I think you are to make use of your authority as censor, and by an annual *index expurgatorius* expunge all words and phrases that are offensive to good sense, and condemn those barbarous mutilations of vowels and syllables. In this last point the usual pretence is, that they spell as they speak. A noble standard for language! to depend upon the caprice of every coxcomb who, because words are the clothing of our thoughts, cuts them out and shapes them as he pleases, and changes them oftener than his dress. I believe all reasonable people would be content that such refiners were more sparing in their words, and liberal in their syllables: and upon this head I should be glad you would bestow some advice upon several young readers in our churches, who, coming up from the university full fraught with admiration of our town politeness, will needs correct the style of their prayer-books. In reading the Absolution, they are very careful to say *pardons* and *absolves:* and in the prayer for the royal family, it must be *endue'um, enrich'um, prosper'um,* and *bring'um.* Then in their sermons they use all the modern terms of art, *sham, banter, mob, bubble,*[3] *bully, cutting, shuffling,* and *palming; all* which, and many more of the like stamp, as I have heard them often in the pulpit from such young sophisters, so I have read them in some of 'those sermons that have made most noise of late.' The design, it seems, is to avoid the dreadful imputation of pedantry; to show us that they know the town, understand

[3] Anyone defrauded. So used after the time of the South Sea Bubble.

men and manners, and have not been poring upon old, unfashionable books in the university.

"I should be glad to see you the instrument of introducing into our style that simplicity which is the best and truest ornament of most things in life, which the politer age always aimed at in their building and dress, *simplex munditiis*, as well as in their productions of wit. It is manifest that all new affected modes of speech, whether borrowed from the court, the town, or the theatre, are the first perishing parts in any language; and, as I could prove by many hundred instances, have been so in ours. The writings of Hooker,[4] who was a country clergyman, and of Parsons[5] the Jesuit, both in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, are in a style that, with very few allowances, would not offend any present reader, and are much more clear and intelligible than those of Sir Harry Wotton,[6] Sir Robert Naunton,[7] Osborn,[8] Daniel[9] the historian, and several others who *writ* later; but being men of the court, and affecting the phrases then in fashion, they are often either not to be understood, or appear perfectly ridiculous.

"What remedies are to be applied to these evils I have not room to consider, having, I fear, already taken up most of your paper. Besides, I think it is our office only to represent abuses, and yours to redress them. I am, with great respect, sir,

"Yours, etc."

[4] 1553-1600. For some years rector of Boscombe, Salisbury. *Cf.* Hallam's verdict:—"So little is there of vulgarity in his racy idiom, of pedantry in his learned phrase, that I know not whether any later writer has more admirably displayed the capacities of our language."

[5] Robert Parsons (1546-1610), a famous Jesuit agitator in the reign of Elizabeth.

[6] Sir Henry Wotton (1568-1639). The "Reliquiæ Wottonianæ" were edited by Izaak Walton, 1651.

[7] Sir R. Naunton (1563-1635) was author of "Fragmenta Regalia," an account of certain Elizabethan celebrities.

[8] Francis Osborn (1589-1658) was author of "Advice to a Son," concerning which Johnson said, that "were a man to write so now, the boys would throw stones at him."

[9] Sam. Daniel (1562-1619), a poet and historian. Swift's criticism is unjust, for Daniel's style has always been praised for its perspicuity.

THE VINDICATION OF ISAAC BICKERSTAFF

MR. PARTRIDGE[1] has been lately pleased to treat me after a very rough manner, in that which is called his "Almanac" for the present year: such usage is very indecent from one gentleman to another, and does not at all contribute to the discovery of truth, which ought to be the great end in all disputes of the learned. To call a man a fool and villain, an impudent fellow, only for differing from him in a point merely speculative, is, in my humble opinion, a very improper style for a person of his education. I appeal to the learned world, whether, in last year's predictions, I gave him the least provocation for such unworthy treatment. Philosophers have differed in all ages; but the discreetest among them have always differed as became philosophers. Scurrility and passion, in a controversy among scholars, is just so much of nothing to the purpose, and at best a tacit confession of a weak cause: my concern is not so much for my own reputation, as that of the republic of letters, which Mr. Partridge has endeavored to wound through my sides. If men of public spirit must be superciliously treated for their ingenious attempts, how will true, useful knowledge be ever advanced? I wish Mr. Partridge knew the thoughts which foreign universities have conceived of his ungenerous proceedings with me; but I am too tender of his reputation to publish them to the world. That spirit of envy and pride, which blasts so many rising geniuses

[1] The history of the famous joke is briefly this. In 1708, Swift, in ridicule of the pretensions of almanac-makers, published under the name of Bickerstaff his sham "Predictions for the year 1708," one of the predictions being the death of John Partridge on March 29, 1708. Partridge was a well-known prophet of the time, whose book was called "Merlinus Liberatus, by John Partridge, Student in Physick and Astrology, at the Blue Bell in Salisbury Street, in the Strand, London." In April Swift published an account of Partridge's death, and many wits followed this up with numerous epitaphs. Later appeared "Bickerstaff Detected, by J. Partridge," an attempt to turn the joke against Swift, which has been variously attributed to Congreve, Rowe, and Dr. Yalden. Then, in 1709, Swift vindicated himself in this ironical paper. Partridge really lived till 1715, and there is an epitaph to him in Mortlake Churchyard, but he issued no almanac after 1709, for his fame did not survive his metaphorical death at the hands of Swift.

in our nation, is yet unknown among professors abroad: the necessity of justifying myself will excuse my vanity, when I tell the reader, that I have near a hundred honorary letters from several parts of Europe (some as far as Muscovy) in praise of my performance, beside several others which, as I have been credibly informed, were opened in the post-office, and never sent me. It is true, the Inquisition [2] in Portugal was pleased to burn my predictions, and condemn the author and the readers of them: but I hope, at the same time, it will be considered in how deplorable a state learning lies at present in that kingdom: and with the profoundest veneration for crowned heads, I will presume to add, that it a little concerned His Majesty of Portugal to interpose his authority in behalf of a scholar and a gentleman, the subject of a nation with which he is now in so strict an alliance. But the other kingdoms and States of Europe have treated me with more candor and generosity. If I had leave to print the Latin letters transmitted to me from foreign parts, they would fill a volume, and be a full defence against all that Mr. Partridge, or his accomplices of the Portugal Inquisition, will be ever able to object; who, by the way, are the only enemies my predictions have ever met with at home or abroad. But I hope I know better what is due to the honor of a learned correspondence in so tender a point. Yet some of those illustrious persons will perhaps excuse me for transcribing a passage or two [3] in my vindication. The most learned Monsieur Leibnitz thus addresses to me his third letter: "*Illustrissimo Bickerstaffio astrologiæ instauratori,*" etc. Monsieur Le Clerc, quoting my predictions in a treatise he published last year, is pleased to say, "*Ita nuperimme Bickerstaffius magnum illud Angliæ sidus.*" Another great professor writing of me has these words: "*Bickerstaffius nobilis Anglus, astrologorum hujusce sæculi facile princeps.*" Signior Magliabecchi, the great duke's famous library-keeper, spends almost his whole letter in compliments and praises. It is true, the renowned professor of astronomy at Utrecht seems to differ from me in one article; but it is after the modest manner that becomes a philosopher; as, *pace tanti viri dixerim:*

[2] Swift had predicted that the pope would die on September 11th, and it was reported by an ambassador that his book was actually burnt.

[3] These ludicrous quotations are a burlesque of the style of Swift's old antagonist, Bentley (Nichols).

and page 55, he seems to lay the error upon the printer (as indeed it ought), and says, *vel forsan error typographi, cum alioquin Bickerstaffius vir doctissimus,* etc.

If Mr. Partridge had followed these examples in the controversy between us, he might have spared me the trouble of justifying myself in so public a manner. I believe no man is readier to own his errors than I, or more thankful to those who will please to inform him of them. But it seems, this gentleman, instead of encouraging the progress of his own art, is pleased to look upon all attempts of that kind as an invasion of his province. He has been indeed so wise as to make no objection against the truth of my predictions, except in one single point relating to himself: and to demonstrate how much men are blinded by their own partiality, I do solemnly assure the reader, that he is the only person, from whom I ever heard that objection offered; which consideration alone, I think, will take off all its weight.

With my utmost endeavors I have not been able to trace above two objections ever made against the truth of my last year's prophecies: the first was of a Frenchman who was pleased to publish to the world "that the Cardinal de Noailles was still alive, notwithstanding the pretended prophecy of Monsieur Biquerstaffe," but how far a Frenchman, a papist, and an enemy is to be believed in his own cause, against an English Protestant who is true to the government, I shall leave to the candid and impartial reader.

The other objection is the unhappy occasion of this discourse, and relates to an article in my "Predictions," which foretold the death of Mr. Partridge to happen on March 29, 1708. This he is pleased to contradict absolutely in the "Almanac" he has published for the present year, and in that ungentlemanly manner (pardon the expression) as I have above related. In that work he very roundly asserts that he "is not only now alive, but was likewise alive upon that very twenty-ninth of March, when I had foretold he should die." This is the subject of the present controversy between us; which I design to handle with all brevity, perspicuity, and calmness. In this dispute, I am sensible the eyes not only of England but of all Europe will be upon us: and the learned in every coun-

try will, I doubt not, take part on that side where they find most appearance of reason and truth.

Without entering into criticisms of chronology about the hour of his death, I shall only prove that Mr. Partridge is not alive. And my first argument is this: about a thousand gentlemen having bought his "Almanacs" for this year merely to find what he said against me, at every line they read, they would lift up their eyes, and cry out, betwixt rage and laughter, "they were sure no man alive ever writ such damned stuff as this." Neither did I ever hear that opinion disputed, so that Mr. Partridge lies under a dilemma, either of disowning his "Almanac," or allowing himself to be no man alive. Secondly, Death is defined by all philosophers, a separation of the soul and body. Now it is certain, that the poor woman who has best reason to know, has gone about for some time into every alley in the neighborhood, and sworn to the gossips that her husband had neither life nor soul in him. Therefore, if an uninformed carcass walks still about, and is pleased to call itself Partridge, Mr. Bickerstaff does not think himself any way answerable for that. Neither had the said carcass any right to beat the poor boy who happened to pass by it in the street, crying, "a full and true account of Dr. Partridge's death," etc.

Thirdly, Mr. Partridge pretends to tell fortunes, and recover stolen goods; which all the parish says he must do by conversing with the devil and other evil spirits; and no wise man will ever allow he could converse personally with either till after he was dead.

Fourthly, I will plainly prove him to be dead, out of his own "Almanac" for this year and from the very passage which he produces to make us think him alive. He there says, "he is not only now alive, but was also alive upon that very twenty-ninth of March which I foretold he should die on": by this he declares his opinion that a man may be alive now who was not alive a twelvemonth ago. And, indeed, there lies the sophistry of his argument. He dares not assert he was alive ever since that twenty-ninth of March, but that he "is now alive, and was so on that day." I grant the latter; for he did not die till night, as appears by the printed account of his death in a "Letter to a Lord"; and whether he be since re-

vived I leave the world to judge. This indeed is perfect cavilling, and I am ashamed to dwell any longer upon it.

Fifthly, I will appeal to Mr. Partridge himself whether it be probable I could have been so indiscreet to begin my predictions with the only falsehood that ever was pretended to be in them? and this in an affair at home where I had so many opportunities to be exact; and must have given such advantages against me to a person of Mr. Partridge's wit and learning, who, if he could possibly have raised one single objection more against the truth of my prophecies, would hardly have spared me.

And here I must take occasion to reprove the above-mentioned writer of the relation of Mr. Partridge's death in a "Letter to a Lord," who was pleased to tax me with a mistake of four whole hours in my calculation of that event. I must confess, this censure, pronounced with an air of certainty, in a matter that so nearly concerned me, and by a grave, judicious author, moved me not a little. But though I was at that time out of town, yet several of my friends, whose curiosity had led them to be exactly informed (for as to my own part, having no doubt at all in the matter, I never once thought of it) assured me I computed to something under half an hour, which (I speak my private opinion) is an error of no very great magnitude that men should raise a clamor about it. I shall only say, it would not be amiss if that author would henceforth be more tender of other men's reputations as well as his own. It is well there were no more mistakes of that kind; if there had, I presume he would have told me of them with as little ceremony.

There is one objection against Mr. Partridge's death which I have sometimes met with, though indeed very slightly offered, that he still continues to write "Almanacs." But this is no more than what is common to all of that profession: Gadbury,[4] Poor Robin, Dove, Wing, and several others do yearly publish their almanacs though several of them have been dead since before the Revolution. Now the natural reason of this I take to be, that whereas it is the privilege of authors to live after their death, almanac-makers are alone excluded, because

[4] A contemporary almanac-maker, whose life was written by Partridge. "Poor Robin's Almanac" lasted from 1662 to 1828. The others are advertised in the "Daily Courant" in 1705.

their dissertations, treating only upon the minutes as they pass, become useless as those go off. In consideration of which, Time, whose registers they are, gives them a lease in reversion, to continue their works after death.

I should not have given the public or myself the trouble of this vindication if my name had not been made use of by several persons to whom I never lent it; one of which, a few days ago, was pleased to father on me a new set of predictions. But I think these are things too serious to be trifled with. It grieved me to the heart, when I saw my labors, which had cost me so much thought and watching, bawled about by the common hawkers of Grub-street, which I only intended for the weighty consideration of the gravest persons. This prejudiced the world so much at first, that several of my friends had the assurance to ask me whether I were in jest? to which I only answered coldly, "that the event would show." But it is the talent of our age and nation to turn things of the greatest importance into ridicule. When the end of the year had verified all my predictions, out comes Mr. Partridge's "Almanac," disputing the point of his death; so that I am employed, like the general who was forced to kill his enemies twice over, whom a necromancer had raised to life. If Mr. Partridge have practised the same experiment upon himself, and be again alive, long may he continue so; that does not the least contradict my veracity: but I think I have clearly proved, by invincible demonstration, that he died, at furthest, within half an hour of the time I foretold, and not four hours sooner, as the abovementioned author, in his "Letter to a Lord," has maliciously suggested, with design to blast my credit, by charging me with so gross a mistake.

THE DEITY UNFOLDED IN HIS WORKS

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BY

ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER

Earl of Shaftesbury

ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, EARL OF SHAFTESBURY

1671—1713

Anthony Ashley Cooper, the author of the "Characteristics," was the grandson of the great statesman, Dryden's Achitophel, who was the first Earl of Shaftesbury. He had the best means of becoming versed in classical literature and in philosophy. He was taught Greek and Latin orally by a Mrs. Birch, who is said to have spoken those languages fluently, and to have taught her pupil to speak them by the time he was eleven years old. In his grandfather's household he had constant opportunity of intercourse with Locke, and had already at the age of eighteen begun a regular correspondence with him on philosophical questions.

He lived a studious and retired life, spending much of his time abroad, either in Italy, where he studied the fine arts elaborately, or in Holland, where he conversed with Bayle, and other free spirits, who found a refuge there. He took little part in English politics. He sat in the Commons during one Parliament (1694—1698), but broke down as a speaker. Afterwards, as a peer, he was active in the election of William's last Parliament (1701), and is said to have had a hand in the composition of the celebrated speech in which the King called on this Parliament for support in the new war with France. He was a friend of Somers, to whom he addressed the letter on "Enthusiasm," and a faithful Whig.

He died at Naples in 1713. His treatises were all written (at least in their complete form) during the last five years of his life. The letter on "Enthusiasm" (1708) was occasioned by the excitement about the "French Prophets," and was followed by the "Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humor." Both deal with the legitimacy of the application of ridicule to religious pretensions. The "Advice to an Author," which exhibits true self-knowledge as the basis of literary art, was published in 1710. Then came his two distinctly philosophical treatises, the "Inquiry Concerning Virtue" and the "Moralists: a Rhapsody." The above, with "Miscellaneous Reflections" and an "Essay on Art," purporting to be a "notion" of a possible "Tablature of the Judgment of Hercules," form the "Characteristics," which were first published complete after his death.

He had a real love for classical literature, and believed himself, as he was believed by his contemporaries, to write a specially classical style. To later readers he has seemed to have lost vernacular vigor without acquiring classical ease. Questions of religion and philosophy he approached too much in the attitude of a well-bred connoisseur to get to the bottom of them. He vigorously maintained, however, as against Hobbes, the "disinterestedness" of virtue, and introduced the doctrine of a "moral sense," *i.e.*, of a specific feeling of pleasure in good actions, as the source of moral judgments. He was a great student of Epictetus and Antoninus, and had a genuine stoical belief in one divine mind, expressed in nature and communicated to man. "The Deity Unfolded In His Works" is one of the essays in his "Characteristics."

THE DEITY UNFOLDED IN HIS WORKS

HOW oblique and faintly looks the sun on yonder climates, far removed from him! How tedious are the winters there! How deep the horrors of the night, and how uncomfortable even the light of day! The freezing winds employ their fiercest breath, yet are not spent with blowing. The sea, which elsewhere is scarce confined within its limits, lies here immured in walls of crystal. The snow covers the hills, and almost fills the lowest valleys. How wide and deep it lies, incumbent o'er the plains, hiding the sluggish rivers, the shrubs and trees, the dens of beasts, and mansions of distressed and feeble men! See where they lie confined, hardly secure against the raging cold, or the attacks of the wild beasts, now masters of the wasted field, and forced by hunger out of the naked wood. Yet not disheartened (such is the force of human breasts), but thus provided for by art and prudence, the kind compensating gifts of Heaven, men and their herds may wait for a release. For, at length, the sun approaching melts the snow, sets longing men at liberty, and affords them means and time to make provision against the next return of cold. It breaks the icy fetters of the main, where vast sea-monsters pierce through floating islands, with arms which can withstand the crystal rock; whilst others, who of themselves seem great as islands, are by their bulk alone armed against all but man, whose superiority over creatures of such stupendous size and force should make him mindful of his privilege of reason, and force him humbly to adore the great Composer of these wondrous frames, and Author of his own superior wisdom.

But leaving these dull climates, so little favored by the sun, for those happier regions on which he looks more kindly, making perpetual summer, how great an alteration do we find? His purer light confounds weak-sighted mortals, pierced by his scorching beams. Scarce can they tread the glowing ground.

The air they breathe cannot enough abate the fire which burns within their panting breasts. Their bodies melt. O'ercome and fainting, they seek the shade, and wait the cool refreshments of the night. Yet oft the bounteous Creator bestows other refreshments. He casts a veil of clouds before them, and raises gentle gales; favored by which, the men and beasts pursue their labors, and plants refreshed by dews and showers can gladly bear the warmest sunbeams.

And here the varying scene opens to new wonders. We see a country rich with gems, but richer with the fragrant spices it affords. How gravely move the largest of land-creatures on the banks of this fair river! How ponderous are their arms, and vast their strength, with courage and a sense superior to the other beasts! Yet are they tamed (we see) by mankind, and brought even to fight their battles rather as allies and confederates than as slaves. But let us turn our eyes towards these smaller and more curious objects—the numerous and devouring insects on the trees in these wide plains. How shining, strong, and lasting are the subtle threads spun from their artful mouths! Who beside the All-wise has taught them to compose the beautiful soft shells, in which recluse and buried, yet still alive, they undergo such a surprising change, when not destroyed by men, who clothe and adorn themselves with the labors and lives of these weak creatures, and are proud of wearing such inglorious spoils? How sumptuously apparelled, gay, and splendid, are all the various insects which feed on the other plants of this warm region! How beautiful the plants themselves in all their various growths, from the triumphant palm down to the humble moss!

Now may we see that happy country where precious gums and balsams flow from trees, and nature yields her most delicious fruits. How tame and tractable, how patient of labor and of thirst, are those large creatures, who, lifting up their lofty heads, go led and laden through those dry and barren places! Their shape and temper show them framed by nature to submit to man, and fitted for his service, who from hence ought to be more sensible of his wants, and of the Divine bounty thus supplying them.

But behold! through a vast tract of sky before us, the mighty Atlas rears his lofty head, covered with snow, above the clouds.

Beneath the mountain's foot the rocky country rises into hills, a proper basis of the ponderous mass above, where huge embodied rocks lie piled on one another, and seem to prop the high arch of heaven. See! with what trembling steps poor mankind tread the narrow brink of the deep precipice! From whence, with giddy horror, they look down, mistrusting even the ground which bears them, whilst they hear the hollow sound of torrents underneath, and see the ruin of the impending rock, with falling trees which hang with their roots upwards, and seem to drive more ruin after them. Here thoughtless men, seized with the newness of such objects, become thoughtful, and willingly contemplate the incessant changes of this earth's surface. They see, as in one instant, the revolutions of past ages, the fleeting forms of things, and the decay even of this our globe, whose youth and first formation they consider, whilst the apparent spoil and irreparable breaches of the wasted mountain show them the world itself only as a noble ruin, and make them think of its approaching period. But here midway the mountain, a specious border of thick wood harbors our wearied travellers, who now are come among the ever green and lofty pines, the firs, and noble cedars, whose towering heads seem endless in the sky, the rest of trees appearing only as shrubs beside them. And here a different horror seizes our sheltered travellers, when they see the day diminished by the deep shades of the vast wood; which closing thick above, spreads darkness and eternal night below. The faint and gloomy light looks horrid as the shade itself; and the profound stillness of these places imposes silence upon men, struck with the hoarse echoings of every sound within the spacious caverns of the wood. Here space astonishes. Silence itself seems pregnant; whilst an unknown force works on the mind, and dubious objects move the wakeful sense. Mysterious voices are either heard or fancied, and various forms of deity seem to present themselves, and appear more manifest in these sacred sylvan scenes, such as of old gave rise to temples, and favored the religion of the ancient world. Even we ourselves, who in plain characters may read divinity from so many bright parts of earth, choose rather these obscurer places to spell out that mysterious Being, which, to our weak eyes, appears at best under a veil of cloud.

A SCENE OF DOMESTIC FELICITY

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A DEATH-BED SCENE

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THE TRUMPET CLUB

—

ON THE DEATH OF FRIENDS

—

THE SPECTATOR CLUB

—

THE UGLY CLUB

—

SIR ROGER AND THE WIDOW

—

BY

SIR RICHARD STEELE

SIR RICHARD STEELE

1671—1729

Richard Steele was born in 1671, of English parents, in Dublin, where his father was secretary to the Duke of Ormond. He lost his father when he was very young, and was sent by the Duke of Ormond to the Charterhouse, where he was the schoolfellow of Addison. He was admitted a postmaster of Merton College, Oxford, in 1691, but left the university without taking a degree, and entered the army, enlisting as a private in the horse-guards. For this he was disinherited by a rich relation, but his convivial and popular qualities attracted the good-will of his officers, and he obtained a commission and rose to the rank of captain ere he quitted the service in 1703. At the beginning of the reign of Queen Anne he obtained the appointment of Gazetteer. In 1713 Steele entered Parliament as a member for Stockbridge, but two years later was expelled from the House for alleged seditious libels, contained in the "Englishman" and the "Crisis," for which he was certainly only in part responsible. On the accession of George I he obtained some minor offices, received a gratuity, and was knighted. In 1715 he again entered Parliament as member for Boroughbridge, in Yorkshire. Some years before his death he was struck with paralysis, and retired to his country-seat in Wales, where he died in 1729.

Steele commenced his career as an author with a "Poem on the Funeral of Queen Mary." It was quickly followed by a treatise in prose, "The Christian Hero"—written in the first instance for his own use while in the army, and then published in order that he might thus bind himself publicly to the principles he had advocated. Steele's first comedy, "Grief à la Mode," had much success and long held a place on the stage. It was followed by several other pieces with varying fortune. As a dramatic writer Steele was anxious, as many of his papers show, together with Addison and others, to hasten the time when the morals of the age should be reformed by a well-regulated theatre. But though Steele had considerable success both as a playwriter and as a pamphleteer, he owes his chief reputation to his efforts as an essayist. The "Tatler," which he commenced in 1709, was the beginning of a new era in periodical writing. The paper appeared three times a week, with some items of news, especially on foreign affairs, respecting which his position as Gazetteer enabled him to obtain the earliest information; but the distinctive point of the "Tatler" was the papers which it contained on the moral, social, and economical topics of the day, interspersed with literary and theatrical notices; the model thus formed has been copied down to the present day in many contemporary weekly journals. The "Tatler" was followed in 1711 by the "Spectator," in 1713 by the "Guardian," and by a succession of other journals of similar nature, among which were the "Rambler" and the "Idler." To his association with the great name of Addison, even more than to his own merits, Steele owes the reputation he has acquired in English literature. He possesses considerable dramatic and descriptive power; his style is ordinarily light and graceful, well fitted to the somewhat ephemeral subjects about which he commonly writes. But in his more serious moods he is not without a certain unaffected tenderness, which has the powerful charm of sincerity. The essays given here were contributed to the "Tatler" and the "Spectator," respectively.

A SCENE OF DOMESTIC FELICITY

Interea dulces pendent circum oscula nati,
Casta pudicitiam servat domus.—Virgil, "Georgics," ii. 523.

His cares are eas'd with intervals of bliss;
His little children, climbing for a kiss,
Welcome their father's late return at night,
His faithful bed is crown'd with chaste delight.—*Dryden.*

THERE are several persons who have many pleasures and entertainments in their possession, which they do not enjoy. It is, therefore, a kind and good office to acquaint them with their own happiness, and turn their attention to such instances of their good fortune as they are apt to overlook. Persons in the married state often want such a monitor; and pine away their days, by looking upon the same condition in anguish and murmur, which carries with it in the opinion of others a complication of all the pleasures of life, and a retreat from its inquietudes.

I am led into this thought by a visit I made an old friend, who was formerly my schoolfellow. He came to town last week with his family for the winter, and yesterday morning sent me word his wife expected me to dinner. I am, as it were, at home at that house, and every member of it knows me for their well-wisher. I cannot, indeed, express the pleasures it is, to be met by the children with so much joy as I am when I go thither. The boys and girls strive who shall come first, when they think it is I that am knocking at the door; and that child which loses the race to me runs back again to tell the father it is Mr. Bickerstaff.[1] This day I was led in by a pretty girl, that we all thought must have forgot me, for the family has been out of town these two years. Her knowing me again was a mighty subject with us, and took up our discourse at the first entrance. After which, they began to rally me upon a thousand little stories they heard

[1] Swift borrowed the name from a locksmith's sign, and Steele adopted it because, from Swift's use of it, it was sure to gain "an audience of all who had any taste of wit."

in the country, about my marriage to one of my neighbor's daughters. Upon which the gentleman, my friend, said, " Nay, if Mr. Bickerstaff marries a child of any of his old companions, I hope mine shall have the preference; there is Mrs. Mary is *now sixteen*, and would make him as fine a widow as the best of them. But I know him too well: he is so enamoured with the very memory of those who flourished in our youth, that he will not so much as look upon the modern beauties. I remember, old gentleman, how often you went home in a day to refresh your countenance and dress when Teraminta reigned in your heart. As we came up in the coach, I repeated to my wife some of your verses on her." With such reflections on little passages which happened long ago, we passed our time, during a cheerful and elegant meal. After dinner, his lady left the room, as did also the children. As soon as we were alone, he took me by the hand; " Well, my good friend," says he, " I am heartily glad to see thee; I was afraid you would never have seen all the company that dined with you to-day again. Do not you think the good woman of the house a little altered, since you followed her from the playhouse, to find out who she was, for me? " I perceived a tear fall down his cheek as he spoke, which moved me not a little. But, to turn the discourse, I said, " She is not indeed quite that creature she was, when she returned me the letter I carried from you; and told me, 'she hoped, as I was a gentleman, I would be employed no more to trouble her, who had never offended me; but would be so much the gentleman's friend, as to dissuade him from a pursuit, which he could never succeed in.' You may remember, I thought her in earnest; and you were forced to employ your cousin Will, who made his sister get acquainted with her, for you. You cannot expect her to be forever fifteen." " Fifteen! " replied my good friend: " Ah! you little understand, you that have lived a bachelor, how great, how exquisite a pleasure there is, in being really beloved! It is impossible, that the most beauteous face in nature should raise in me such pleasing ideas, as when I look upon that excellent woman. That fading in her countenance is chiefly caused by her watching with me in my fever. This was followed by a fit of sickness, which had like to have carried her off last winter. I tell you sincerely, I have so many obligations to her, that I cannot, with any sort of moderation, think of her

present state of health. But as to what you say of fifteen, she gives me every day pleasures beyond what I ever knew in the possession of her beauty, when I was in the vigor of youth. Every moment of her life brings me fresh instances of her complacency to my inclinations, and her prudence in regard to my fortune. Her face is to me much more beautiful than when I first saw it; there is no decay in any feature, which I cannot trace, from the very instant it was occasioned by some anxious concern for my welfare and interests. Thus, at the same time, methinks, the love I conceived towards her for what she was, is heightened by my gratitude for what she is. The love of a wife is as much above the idle passion commonly called by that name, as the loud laughter of buffoons is inferior to the elegant mirth of gentlemen. Oh, she is an inestimable jewel! In her examination of her household affairs, she shows a certain fearfulness to find a fault, which makes her servants obey her like children; and the meanest we have has an ingenuous shame for an offence, not always to be seen in children in other families. I speak freely to you, my old friend; ever since her sickness, things that gave me the quickest joy before, turn now to a certain anxiety. As the children play in the next room, I know the poor things by their steps, and am considering what they must do, should they lose their mother in their tender years. The pleasure I used to take in telling my boy stories of battles, and asking my girl questions about the disposal of her baby, and the gossiping of it, is turned into inward reflection and melancholy."

He would have gone on in this tender way, when the good lady entered, and with an inexpressible sweetness in her countenance told us, "she had been searching her closet for something very good, to treat such an old friend as I was." Her husband's eye sparkled with pleasure at the cheerfulness of her countenance; and I saw all his fears vanish in an instant. The lady observing something in our looks which showed we had been more serious than ordinary, and seeing her husband receive her with great concern under a forced cheerfulness, immediately guessed at what we had been talking of; and applying herself to me, said, with a smile, "Mr. Bickerstaff, do not believe a word of what he tells you; I shall still live to have you for my second, as I have often promised you, unless he takes more care of himself than he has done since his coming

to town. You must know, he tells me he finds London is a much more healthy place than the country; for he sees several of his old acquaintances and schoolfellows are here young fellows with fair full-bottomed periwigs.[2] I could scarce keep him this morning from going out open-breasted." My friend, who is always extremely delighted with her agreeable humor, made her sit down with us. She did it with that easiness which is peculiar to women of sense; and to keep up the good humor she had brought in with her, turned her raillery upon me. "Mr. Bickerstaff, you remember you followed me one night from the play-house: suppose you should carry me thither to-morrow night, and lead me into the front box." This put us into a long field of discourse about the beauties, who were mothers to the present, and shined in the boxes twenty years ago. I told her, "I was glad she had transferred so many of her charms, and I did not question but her eldest daughter was within half a year of being a toast."[3]

We were pleasing ourselves with this fantastical preferment of the young lady, when on a sudden we were alarmed with the noise of a drum, and immediately entered my little godson to give me a point of war. His mother, between laughing and chiding, would have put him out of the room; but I would not part with him so. I found, upon conversation with him, though he was a little noisy in his mirth, that the child had excellent parts, and was a great master of all the learning on the other side eight years old. I perceived him a very great historian in Æsop's Fables: but he frankly declared to me his mind, "that he did not delight in that learning, because he did not believe they were true"; for which reason I found he had very much turned his studies, for about a twelvemonth past, into the lives and adventures of Don Bellianis of Greece, Guy of Warwick, the Seven Champions, and other historians of that age. I could not but observe the satisfaction the father took in the forwardness of his son; and that these diversions might turn to some profit, I found the boy had made remarks which might be of service to him during the course of his whole life. He would

[2] A privilege allowed only to young beaux. In "Tatler," No. 246, Steele reproves "a fat fellow for wearing his breast open in the midst of winter out of an affectation of youth."

[3] An institution that first came into vogue in Anne's reign. At the age of seventeen every young lady of quality expected to become a toast at some club, more especially at the Kit-Cat. The *locus classicus* on the subject is in the 24th "Tatler."

tell you the mismanagements of John Hickathrift, find fault with the passionate temper in Bevis of Southampton, and loved Saint George for being the champion of England; and by this means had his thoughts insensibly moulded into the notions of discretion, virtue, and honor. I was extolling his accomplishments, when his mother told me that the little girl who led me in this morning was in her way a better scholar than he. "Betty," said she, "deals chiefly in fairies and sprites, and sometimes in a winter night will terrify the maids with her accounts, until they are afraid to go up to bed."

I sat with them until it was very late, sometimes in merry, sometimes in serious discourse, with this particular pleasure, which gives the only true relish to all conversation, a sense that every one of us liked each other. I went home considering the different conditions of a married life and that of a bachelor; and I must confess it struck me with a secret concern, to reflect, that whenever I go off I shall leave no traces behind me. In this pensive mood I return to my family: that is to say, to my maid, my dog, and my cat, who only can be the better *or* worse for what happens to me.

A DEATH-BED SCENE

Ut in vita, sic in studiis, pulcherrimum et humanissimum existimo severitatem comitatemque miscere, ne illa in tristitiam, hæc in petulantiam procedat.—Pliny.

As in a man's life, so in his studies, I think it the most beautiful and humane thing in the world, so to mingle gravity with pleasantry, that the one may not sink into melancholy, nor the other rise up into wantonness.

I WAS walking about my chamber this morning in a very gay humor, when I saw a coach stop at my door, and a youth about fifteen alighting out of it, whom I perceived to be the eldest son of my bosom friend that I gave some account of in my paper of the seventeenth of the last month. I felt a sensible pleasure rising in me at the sight of him, my acquaintance having begun with his father when he was just such a stripling, and about that very age. When he came up to me he took me by the hand, and burst out in tears. I was extremely moved, and immediately said, "Child, how does your father do?" He began to reply, "My mother——" but could not go on for weeping. I went down with him into the coach, and gathered out of him, that his mother was then dying; and that, while the holy man was doing the last offices to her, he had taken that time to come and call me to his father, who, he said, would certainly break his heart, if I did not go and comfort him. The child's discretion in coming to me of his own head, and the tenderness he showed for his parents, would have quite overpowered me, had I not resolved to fortify myself for the seasonable performances of those duties which I owed to my friend. As we were going, I could not but reflect upon the character of that excellent woman, and the greatness of his grief for the loss of one who has ever been the support to him under all other afflictions. How, thought I, will he be able to bear the hour of her death, that could not, when I was lately

with him, speak of a sickness, which was then past, without sorrow? We were now got pretty far into Westminster, and arrived at my friend's house. At the door of it I met Favonius, not without a secret satisfaction to find he had been there. I had formerly conversed with him at this house; and as he abounds with that sort of virtue and knowledge which make religion beautiful, and never leads the conversation into the violence and rage of party disputes, I listened to him with great pleasure. Our discourse chanced to be upon the subject of death, which he treated with such a strength of reason, and greatness of soul, that, instead of being terrible, it appeared to a mind rightly cultivated, altogether to be contemned, or rather to be desired. As I met him at the door, I saw in his face a certain glowing of grief and humanity, heightened with an air of fortitude and resolution, which, as I afterwards found, had such an irresistible force, as to suspend the pains of the dying, and the lamentation of the nearest friends who attended her. I went up directly to the room where she lay, and was met at the entrance by my friend, who, notwithstanding his thoughts had been composed a little before, at the sight of me turned away his face and wept. The little family of children renewed the expressions of their sorrow according to their several ages and degrees of understanding. The eldest daughter was in tears, busied in attendance upon her mother; others were kneeling about the bedside; and what troubled me most, was, to see a little boy, who was too young to know the reason, weeping only because his sisters did. The only one in the room who seemed resigned and comforted was the dying person. At my approach to the bedside she told me, with a low broken voice, "This is kindly done—take care of your friend—do not go from him." She had before taken leave of her husband and children, in a manner proper for so solemn a parting, and with a gracefulness peculiar to a woman of her character. My heart was torn in pieces, to see the husband on one side suppressing and keeping down the swellings of his grief, for fear of disturbing her in her last moments; and the wife, even at that time, concealing the pains she endured, for fear of increasing his affliction. She kept her eyes upon him for some moments after she grew speechless, and soon after closed them forever. In the moment of her departure, my friend, who had thus far commanded

himself, gave a deep groan, and fell into a swoon by her bedside.[1] The distraction of the children, who thought they saw both their parents expiring together, and now lying dead before them, would have melted the hardest heart; but they soon perceived their father recover, whom I helped to remove into another room, with a resolution to accompany him until the first pangs of his affliction were abated. I knew consolation would now be impertinent, and therefore contented myself to sit by him, and condole with him in silence. For I shall here use the method of an ancient author,[2] who, in one of his epistles, relating the virtues and death of Macrinus's wife, expresses himself thus: "I shall suspend my advice to this best of friends until he is made capable of receiving it by those three great remedies, the necessity of submission, length of time, and satiety of grief."

In the mean time, I cannot but consider, with much commiseration, the melancholy state of one who has had such a part of himself torn from him, and which he misses in every circumstance of life. His condition is like that of one who has lately lost his right arm, and is every moment offering to help himself with it. He does not appear to himself the same person in his house, at his table, in company, or in retirement; and loses the relish of all the pleasures and diversions that were before entertaining to him by her participation of them. The most agreeable objects recall the sorrow for her with whom he used to enjoy them. This additional satisfaction, from the taste of pleasures in the society of one we love, is admirably described by Milton, who represents Eve, though in Paradise itself, no further pleased with the beautiful objects around her, than as she sees them in company with Adam, in that passage so inexpressibly charming:

> "With thee conversing, I forget all time;
> All seasons, and their change; all please alike.
> Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet
> With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,

[1] With this sentence Steele's share in the paper stops. The rest has always been assigned to Addison, and it is instructive to compare his conclusion with Steele's in "Tatler," 281. Steele's emotion kept pace with his imagination, while Addison constantly checked his from an over-regard for "elegant" expression. Thus, while Addison ends this essay incongruously with a fragment of criticism, Steele is quite overcome, and "commended the hamper of wine until two of the clock this morning."

[2] Seneca.

When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glistering with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild; the silent night,
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of heaven, her starry train.
But neither breath of morn when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glistering with dew; nor fragrance after showers;
Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night,
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet."

The variety of images in this passage is infinitely pleasing, and the recapitulation of each particular image, with a little varying of the expression, makes one of the finest turns of words that I have ever seen; which I rather mention because Mr. Dryden[3] has said, in his preface to Juvenal, that he could meet with no turn of words in Milton.

It may be further observed, that though the sweetness of these verses has something in it of a pastoral, yet it excels the ordinary kind, as much as the scene of it is above an ordinary field or meadow. I might here, since I am accidentally led into this subject, show several passages in Milton that have as excellent turns of this nature as any of our English poets whatsoever; but shall only mention that which follows, in which he describes the fallen angels engaged in the intricate disputes of predestination, free-will, and fore-knowledge; and, to humor the perplexity, makes a kind of labyrinth in the very words that describe it:

"Others apart sat on a hill retir'd,
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
Of providence, fore-knowledge, will, and fate,
Fix'd fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute,
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost."

[3] Near the end of his "Discourse on Satire," Dryden says that he searched the older poets in quest of "beautiful turns of thoughts and words," but that he found none in Cowley or in Milton.

THE TRUMPET CLUB

Habeo senectuti magnam gratiam, quæ mihi sermonis aviditatem auxit, potionis et cibi sustulit.—Cicero, "de Senectute."

I am much beholden to old age, which has increased my eagerness for conversation, in proportion as it has lessened my appetites of hunger and thirst.

AFTER having applied my mind with more than ordinary attention to my studies, it is my usual custom to relax and unbend it in the conversation of such as are rather easy than shining companions.[1] This I find particularly necessary for me before I retire to rest, in order to draw my slumbers upon me by degrees, and fall asleep insensibly. This is the particular use I make of a set of heavy honest men, with whom I have passed many hours with much indolence, though not with great pleasure. Their conversation is a kind of preparative for sleep; it takes the mind down from its abstractions, leads it into the familiar traces of thought, and lulls it into that state of tranquillity, which is the condition of a thinking man, when he is but half awake. After this, my reader will not be surprised to hear the account which I am about to give of a club of my own contemporaries, among whom I pass two or three hours every evening. This I look upon as taking my first nap before I go to bed. The truth of it is, I should think myself unjust to posterity, as well as to the society at the Trumpet,[2] of which I am a member, did not I in some part of my writings give an account of the persons among whom I have passed almost a sixth part of my time for these last forty years. Our club consisted originally of fifteen; but, partly by the severity of the law in arbitrary times, and partly by the natural

[1] As clubs are of some interest to students of the English essay, reference may be made to Timbs's "History of Clubs and Club Life," and to Ashton's "Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne." To the latter excellent book the present writer has to express special obligations.

[2] A tavern in Shire Lane, near the new Courts of Justice. The Kit-Cat Club also originated here about 1700.

effects of old age, we are at present reduced to a third part of that number; in which, however, we have this consolation, that the best company is said to consist of five persons. I must confess, besides the aforementioned benefit which I meet with in the conversation of this select society, I am not the less pleased with the company, in that I find myself the greatest wit among them, and am heard as their oracle in all points of learning and difficulty.

Sir Jeoffery Notch, who is the oldest of the club, has been in possession of the right-hand chair time out of mind, and is the only man among us that has the liberty of stirring the fire. This our foreman is a gentleman of an ancient family, that came to a great estate some years before he had discretion, and run it out in hounds, horses, and cock-fighting; for which reason he looks upon himself as an honest, worthy gentleman, who has had misfortunes in the world, and calls every thriving man a pitiful upstart.

Major Matchlock is the next senior, who served in the last civil wars, and has all the battles by heart. He does not think any action in Europe worth talking of since the fight of Marston Moor; and every night tells us of having been knocked off his horse at the rising[3] of the London apprentices; for which he is in great esteem among us.

Honest old Dick Reptile is the third of our society. He is a good-natured indolent man, who speaks little himself, but laughs at our jokes; and brings his young nephew along with him, a youth of eighteen years old, to show him good company, and give him a taste of the world. This young fellow sits generally silent; but whenever he opens his mouth, or laughs at anything that passes, he is constantly told by his uncle, after a jocular manner, "Ay, ay, Jack, you young men think us fools; but we old men know you are."

The greatest wit of our company, next to myself, is a bencher of the neighboring inn, who in his youth frequented the ordinaries[4] about Charing-cross, and pretends to have been intimate with Jack Ogle. He has about ten distichs of Hudibras without book, and never leaves the club until he has applied

[3] July 14, 1647.

[4] Locket's Ordinary at Charing-cross was one of the fashionable restaurants of the time. *Cf.* "Tale of a Tub," sec. 2.

them all. If any modern wit be mentioned, or any town-frolic spoken of, he shakes his head at the dulness of the present age, and tells us a story of Jack Ogle.

For my own part, I am esteemed among them, because they see I am something respected by others; though at the same time I understand by their behavior, that I am considered by them as a man of a great deal of learning, but no knowledge of the world; insomuch, that the major sometimes, in the height of his military pride, calls me the Philosopher: and Sir Jeoffery, no longer ago than last night, upon a dispute what day of the month it was then in Holland, pulled his pipe out of his mouth, and cried, "What does the scholar say to it?"

Our club meets precisely at six o'clock in the evening; but I did not come last night until half an hour after seven, by which means I escaped the battle of Naseby, which the major usually begins at about three-quarters after six: I found also, that my good friend the bencher had already spent three of his distichs; and only waited an opportunity to hear a sermon spoken of, that he might introduce the couplet where "a stick" rhymes to "ecclesiastic." At my entrance into the room, they were naming a red petticoat and a cloak, by which I found that the bencher had been diverting them with a story of Jack Ogle.

I had no sooner taken my seat, but Sir Jeoffery, to show his goodwill towards me, gave me a pipe of his own tobacco, and stirred up the fire. I look upon it as a point of morality, to be obliged by those who endeavor to oblige me; and therefore, in requital for his kindness, and to set the conversation a-going, I took the best occasion I could to put him upon telling us the story of old Gantlett,[5] which he always does with very particular concern. He traced up his descent on both sides for several generations, describing his diet and manner of life, with his several battles, and particularly that in which he fell. This Gantlett was a game cock, upon whose head the knight, in his youth, had won five hundred pounds, and lost two thousand. This naturally set the major upon the account of Edge-hill fight, and ended in a duel of Jack Ogle's.

Old Reptile was extremely attentive to all that was said, though it was the same he had heard every night for these

[5] Cock-fighting was then a favorite pastime. As much as 500 guineas was staked on an inter-county match.

twenty years, and, upon all occasions, winked upon his nephew to mind what passed.

This may suffice to give the world a taste of our innocent conversation, which we spun out until about ten of the clock, when my maid came with a lantern to light me home. I could not but reflect with myself, as I was going out, upon the talkative humor of old men, and the little figure which that part of life makes in one who cannot employ his natural propensity in discourses which would make him venerable. I must own, it makes me very melancholy in company, when I hear a young man begin a story; and have often observed, that one of a quarter of an hour long in a man of five-and-twenty, gathers circumstances every time he tells it, until it grows into a long Canterbury tale of two hours, by that time he is threescore.

The only way of avoiding such a trifling and frivolous old age, is to lay up in our way to it such stores of knowledge and observation, as may make us useful and agreeable in our declining years. The mind of man in a long life will become a magazine of wisdom or folly, and will consequently discharge itself in something impertinent or improving. For which reason, as there is nothing more ridiculous than an old trifling story-teller, so there is nothing more venerable than one who has turned his experience to the entertainment and advantage of mankind.

In short, we, who are in the last stage of life, and are apt to indulge ourselves in talk, ought to consider if what we speak be worth being heard, and endeavor to make our discourse like that of Nestor, which Homer compares to the flowing of honey for its sweetness.

I am afraid I shall be thought guilty of this excess I am speaking of, when I cannot conclude without observing that Milton certainly thought of this passage in Homer, when, in his description of an eloquent spirit, he says:—

"His tongue dropped manna."

ON THE DEATH OF FRIENDS

Dies, ni fallor, adest, quem semper acerbum,
Semper honoratum, sic dii voluistis, habebo.—*Virgil*, "Æneid," v. 49.

And now the rising day renews the year,
A day forever sad, forever dear.—*Dryden.*

THERE are those among mankind, who can enjoy no relish of their being, except the world is made acquainted with all that relates to them, and think everything lost that passes unobserved; but others find a solid delight in stealing by the crowd, and modelling their life after such a manner as is as much above the approbation as the practice of the vulgar. Life being too short to give instances great enough of true friendship or goodwill, some sages have thought it pious to preserve a certain reverence for the Manes of their deceased friends; and have withdrawn themselves from the rest of the world at certain seasons, to commemorate in their own thoughts such of their acquaintance who have gone before them out of this life. And indeed, when we are advanced in years, there is not a more pleasing entertainment, than to recollect in a gloomy moment the many we have parted with that have been dear and agreeable to us, and to cast a melancholy thought or two after those with whom, perhaps, we have indulged ourselves in whole nights of mirth and jollity. With such inclinations in my heart I went to my closet yesterday in the evening, and resolved to be sorrowful; upon which occasion I could not but look with disdain upon myself, that though all the reasons which I had to lament the loss of many of my friends are now as forcible as at the moment of their departure, yet did not my heart swell with the same sorrow which I felt at that time; but I could, without tears, reflect upon many pleasing adventures I have had with some, who have long been blended with common earth. Though it is by the benefit of nature that length of time thus blots out the violence of afflictions; yet, with tempers too much

given to pleasure, it is almost necessary to revive the old places of grief in our memory; and ponder step by step on past life, to lead the mind into that sobriety of thought which poises the heart, and makes it beat with due time, without being quickened by desire, or retarded with despair, from its proper and equal motion. When we wind up a clock that is out of order, to make it go well for the future, we do not immediately set the hand to the present instant, but we make it strike the round of all its hours, before it can recover the regularity of its time. Such, thought I, shall be my method this evening; and since it is that day of the year which I dedicate to the memory of such in another life as I much delighted in when living, an hour or two shall be sacred to sorrow and their memory, while I run over all the melancholy circumstances of this kind which have occurred to me in my whole life.

The first sense of sorrow I ever knew was upon the death of my father,[1] at which time I was not quite five years of age; but was rather amazed at what all the house meant than possessed with a real understanding why nobody was willing to play with me. I remember I went into the room where his body lay, and my mother sat weeping alone by it. I had my battledore in my hand, and fell a-beating the coffin, and calling papa; for, I know not how, I had some slight idea that he was locked up there. My mother catched me in her arms, and, transported beyond all patience of the silent grief she was before in, she almost smothered me in her embraces; and told me in a flood of tears, "Papa could not hear me, and would play with me no more, for they were going to put him under ground, whence he could never come to us again." She was a very beautiful woman, of a noble spirit, and there was a dignity in her grief amidst all the wildness of her transport which, methought, struck me with an instinct of sorrow, that, before I was sensible of what it was to grieve, seized my very soul, and has made pity the weakness of my heart ever since. The mind in infancy is, methinks, like the body in embryo; and receives impressions so forcible, that they are as hard to be removed by reason as any mark with which a child is born is to be taken away by any future applica-

[1] Steele's father was a lawyer, and was once secretary to the Duke of Ormond, who procured the essayist a foundation at the Charterhouse, where his friendship with Addison began.

tion. Hence it is that good-nature in me is no merit; but having been so frequently overwhelmed with her tears before I knew the cause of any affliction, or could draw defences from my own judgment, I imbibed commiseration, remorse, and an unmanly gentleness of mind, which has since ensnared me into ten thousand calamities; from whence I can reap no advantage, except it be that, in such a humor as I am now in, I can the better indulge myself in the softness of humanity, and enjoy that sweet anxiety which arises from the memory of past afflictions.

We, that are very old, are better able to remember things which befell us in our distant youth than the passages of later days. For this reason it is that the companions of my strong and vigorous years present themselves more immediately to me in this office of sorrow. Untimely and unhappy deaths are what we are most apt to lament; so little are we able to make it indifferent when a thing happens, though we know it must happen. Thus we groan under life, and bewail those who are relieved from it. Every object that returns to our imagination raises different passions, according to the circumstance of their departure. Who can have lived in an army, and in a serious hour reflect upon the many gay and agreeable men that might long have flourished in the arts of peace, and not join with the imprecations of the fatherless and widow on the tyrant to whose ambition they fell sacrifices? But gallant men, who are cut off by the sword, move rather our veneration than our pity; and we gather relief enough from their own contempt of death, to make that no evil, which was approached with so much cheerfulness, and attended with so much honor. But when we turn our thoughts from the great parts of life on such occasions, and instead of lamenting those who stood ready to give death to those from whom they had the fortune to receive it; I say, when we let our thoughts wander from such noble objects, and consider the havoc which is made among the tender and the innocent, pity enters with an unmixed softness, and possesses all our souls at once.

Here (were there words to express such sentiments with proper tenderness) I should record the beauty, innocence, and untimely death of the first object my eyes ever beheld with love. The beauteous virgin! how ignorantly did she charm, how carelessly excel! O Death! thou hast right to the bold, to the

ambitious, to the high, and to the haughty; but why this cruelty to the humble, to the meek, to the undiscerning, to the thoughtless? Nor age, nor business, nor distress can erase the dear image from my imagination. In the same week, I saw her dressed for a ball, and in a shroud. How ill did the habit of death become the pretty trifler! I still behold the smiling earth——A large train of disasters were coming on to my memory, when my servant knocked at my closet-door, and interrupted me with a letter, attended with a hamper of wine, of the same sort with that which is to be put to sale on Thursday next at Garraway's coffee-house.[2] Upon the receipt of it I sent for three of my friends. We are so intimate that we can be company in whatever state of mind we meet, and can entertain each other without expecting always to rejoice. The wine we found to be generous and warming, but with such a heat as moved us rather to be cheerful than frolicsome. It revived the spirits, without firing the blood. We commended it until two of the clock this morning; and having to-day met a little before dinner, we found that, though we drank two bottles a man, we had much more reason to recollect than forget what had passed the night before.

[2] A noted coffee-house in Change-alley, Cornhill. It was opened about 1660 by Thomas Garraway who was the first to sell tea.

THE SPECTATOR CLUB

Ast alii sex
Et plures uno conclamant ore.—Juvenal, "Satires," vii. 166.

Six more at least join their consenting voice.

THE first of our society is a gentleman of Worcestershire, of an ancient descent, a baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley.[1] His great-grandfather was inventor of that famous country-dance which is called after him. All who know that shire are very well acquainted with the parts and merits of Sir Roger. He is a gentleman that is very singular in his behavior, but his singularities proceed from his good sense, and are contradictions to the manners of the world, only as he thinks the world is in the wrong. However, this humor creates him no enemies, for he does nothing with sourness or obstinacy; and his being unconfined to modes and forms makes him but the readier and more capable to please and oblige all who know him. When he is in town he lives in Soho Square. It is said he keeps himself a bachelor by reason he was crossed in love by a perverse beautiful widow of the next county to him. Before this disappointment, Sir Roger was what you call a fine gentleman,[2] had often supped with my Lord Rochester[3] and Sir George Etherege,[4] fought a duel upon his first coming to town, and kicked bully Dawson[5] in a public coffee-house for calling him

[1] The tune and dance are said to have been named after a Yorkshire knight, Roger Calverley, who lived in the reign of Richard I (Chappell's "Music of the Olden Time").

[2] This describes those whom Steele calls "ambitious young men, every night employed in roasting Porters, smoaking Coblers, knocking down Watchmen, overturning Constables, etc." ("Tatler," 77.)

[3] John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1647-1680), a poet of some ability. Rochester and Sedley anticipated the Mohocks of Queen Anne's reign, and were notorious even in the Restoration age.

[4] This dramatist (1634-1694) closely resembled the two writers mentioned above. His plays are of little value, but one of them, "The Comical Revenge" (1664), has the distinction of having founded the English Comedy of Manners.

[5] A tavern swashbuckler, who is represented in Brown's "Letters from the Living to the Dead" as thus challenging a rival bully:—"If ever you intend to be my Rival in Glory, you must fight a Bailiff once a Day, Stand Kick and Cuff once a Week, Challenge some Coward or Other once a Month, Bilk your Lodgings once a Quarter, and Cheat a Taylor once a Year. Never till then will the fame of W—n (Wharton?) ring like Dawson's in every coffee-house, and be the merry subject of every Tavern Tittle-Tattle."

youngster. But being ill-used by the above-mentioned widow, he was very serious for a year and a half; and though, his temper being naturally jovial, he at last got over it, he grew careless of himself and never dressed afterwards. He continues to wear a coat and doublet of the same cut that were in fashion at the time of his repulse, which, in his merry humors, he tells us, has been in and out twelve times since he first wore it. It is said Sir Roger grew humble in his desires after he had forgot his cruel beauty, insomuch that it is reported he has frequently offended with beggars and gypsies; but this is looked upon, by his friends, rather as matter of raillery than truth. He is now in his fifty-sixth year, cheerful, gay, and hearty; keeps a good house both in town and country; a great lover of mankind; but there is such a mirthful cast in his behavior, that he is rather beloved than esteemed.[1] His tenants grow rich, his servants look satisfied, all the young women profess love to him, and the young men are glad of his company. When he comes into a house, he calls the servants by their names, and talks all the way upstairs to a visit. I must not omit that Sir Roger is a justice of the quorum; that he fills the chair at a quarter-session with great abilities, and three months ago gained universal applause, by explaining a passage in the Game Act.

The gentleman next in esteem and authority among us is another bachelor, who is a member of the Inner Temple, a man of great probity, wit, and understanding; but he has chosen his place of residence rather to obey the direction of an old humorsome father than in pursuit of his own inclinations. He was placed there to study the laws of the land, and is the most learned of any of the house in those of the stage. Aristotle and Longinus are much better understood by him than Littleton or

[1] The Coverley papers properly amount to thirty-one in number, of which Addison wrote sixteen, Steele seven, Budgell three, and Tickell one. (No. 410, signed T, has been ascribed to Steele, but internal evidence favors its assignment to Tickell.) The natural outcome of this joint-authorship is the presence of some incongruities in the sketch. To mention but one example, the simple knight who makes guileless comments on the Tombs (Addison's "Spectator," 329) could never have been such a beau in his youth as to have supped with Etherege and Rochester (Steele, "Spectator," 2). It can hardly be doubted that Addison indulged in some irony at the knight's expense, thereby aiming a left-handed blow at Tory squiredom. It is only hero-worship that could make a critic see in Addison's picture nothing but "a sweet image of simplicity and goodness" (Arnold's "Spectator"). Nor is it quite just to say, as Mr. Gosse does, that Sir Roger is "the peculiar property of Addison." This is merely to re-echo what Mr. Forster truly called "the braying of Hurd." Some of the finest touches in the picture are entirely due to Steele, and a very competent critic, after a subtle analysis of the character, arrived at the conclusion that "all that is amiable in the conception belongs to Steele (Minto's "Manual of English Prose Literature," p. 457).

Coke. The father sends up every post questions relating to marriage-articles, leases, and tenures, in the neighborhood; all which questions he agrees with an attorney to answer and take care of in the lump. He is studying the passions themselves, when he should be inquiring into the debates among men which arise from them. He knows the argument of each of the orations of Demosthenes and Tully, but not one case in the reports of our own courts. No one ever took him for a fool; but none, except his intimate friends, know he has a great deal of wit. This turn makes him at once both disinterested and agreeable. As few of his thoughts are drawn from business, they are most of them fit for conversation. His taste for books is a little too just for the age he lives in; he has read all, but approves of very few. His familiarity with the customs, manners, actions, and writings of the ancients, makes him a very delicate observer of what occurs to him in the present world. He is an excellent critic, and the time of the play is his hour of business; exactly at five he passes through New-Inn, crosses through Russell-court, and takes a turn at Will's till the play begins; he has his shoes rubbed and his periwig powdered at the barber's as you go into the Rose. It is for the good of the audience when he is at the play, for the actors have an ambition to please him.

The person of next consideration is Sir Andrew Freeport, a merchant of great eminence in the city of London; a person of indefatigable industry, strong reason, and great experience. His notions of trade are noble and generous, and (as every rich man has usually some sly way of jesting, which would make no great figure were he not a rich man) he calls the sea the British Common. He is acquainted with commerce in all its parts, and will tell you that it is a stupid and barbarous way to extend dominion by arms; for true power is to be got by arts and industry. He will often argue that, if this part of our trade were well cultivated, we should gain from one nation; and if another, from another. I have heard him prove that diligence makes more lasting acquisitions than valor, and that sloth has ruined more nations than the sword. He abounds in several frugal maxims, amongst which the greatest favorite is, "A penny saved is a penny got." A general trader of good sense is pleasanter company than a general scholar; and Sir Andrew having a natural unaffected eloquence, the perspicuity of his

discourse gives the same pleasure that wit would in another man. He has made his fortune himself; and says that England may be richer than other kingdoms by as plain methods as he himself is richer than other men; though at the same time I can say this of him, that there is not a point in the compass but blows home a ship in which he is an owner.

Next to Sir Andrew in the clubroom sits Captain Sentry, a gentleman of great courage, good understanding, but invincible modesty. He is one of those that deserve very well, but are very awkward at putting their talents within the observation of such as should take notice of them. He was some years a captain, and behaved himself with great gallantry in several engagements and at several sieges; but having a small estate of his own, and being next heir to Sir Roger, he has quitted a way of life in which no man can rise suitably to his merit, who is not something of a courtier as well as a soldier. I have heard him often lament that, in a profession where merit is placed in so conspicuous a view, impudence should get the better of modesty. When he has talked to this purpose, I never heard him make a sour expression, but frankly confess that he left the world, because he was not fit for it. A strict honesty and an even regular behavior are in themselves obstacles to him that must press through crowds, who endeavor at the same end with himself, the favor of a commander. He will, however, in his way of talk excuse generals for not disposing according to men's dessert, or inquiring into it; for, says he, that great man who has a mind to help me has as many to break through to come to me as I have to come at him: therefore he will conclude that the man who would make a figure, especially in a military way, must get over all false modesty, and assist his patron against the importunity of other pretenders, by a proper assurance in his own vindication. He says it is a civil cowardice to be backward in asserting what you ought to expect, as it is a military fear to be slow in attacking when it is your duty. With this candor does the gentleman speak of himself and others. The same frankness runs through all his conversation. The military part of his life has furnished him with many adventures, in the relation of which he is very agreeable to the company; for he is never overbearing, though accustomed to command men

in the utmost degree below him; nor ever too obsequious, from an habit of obeying men highly above him.

But that our society may not appear a set of humorists, unacquainted with the gallantries and pleasures of the age, we have amongst us the gallant Will Honeycomb, a gentleman who, according to his years, should be in the decline of his life; but having ever been very careful of his person, and always had a very easy fortune, time has made but a very little impression either by wrinkles on his forehead, or traces on his brain. His person is well turned, and of a good height. He is very ready at that sort of discourse with which men usually entertain women. He has all his life dressed very well, and remembers habits as others do men. He can smile when one speaks to him, and laughs easily. He knows the history of every mode, and can inform you from which of the French king's wenches our wives and daughters had this manner of curling their hair, that way of placing their hoods; whose frailty was covered by such a sort of a petticoat, and whose vanity to show her foot made that part of the dress so short in such a year. In a word, all his conversation and knowledge have been in the female world. As other men of his age will take notice to you what such a minister said upon such and such an occasion, he will tell you when the Duke of Monmouth danced at court, such a woman was then smitten, another was taken with him at the head of his troop in the park. In all these important relations, he has ever about the same time received a kind glance, or a blow of a fan from some celebrated beauty, mother of the present Lord Such-a-one. If you speak of a young commoner that said a lively thing in the House, he starts up, "He has good blood in his veins; Tom Mirable begot him; the rogue cheated me in that affair; that young fellow's mother used me more like a dog than any woman I ever made advances to." This way of talking of his very much enlivens the conversation among us of a more sedate turn, and I find there is not one of the company, but myself, who rarely speak at all, but speaks of him as of that sort of a man who is usually called a well-bred fine gentleman. To conclude his character, where women are not concerned, he is an honest worthy man.

I cannot tell whether I am to account him, whom I am next

to speak of, as one of our company; for he visits us but seldom, but when he does, it adds to every man else a new enjoyment of himself. He is a clergyman, a very philosophic man, of general learning, great sanctity of life, and the most exact good breeding. He has the misfortune to be of a very weak constitution, and consequently cannot accept of such cares and business as preferments in his function would oblige him to; he is therefore among divines what a chamber-counsellor is among lawyers. The probity of his mind, and the integrity of his life, create him followers, as being eloquent or loud advances others. He seldom introduces the subject he speaks upon; but we are so far gone in years that he observes, when he is among us, an earnestness to have him fall on some divine topic, which he always treats with much authority, as one who has no interest in this world, as one who is hastening to the object of all his wishes, and conceives hope from his decays and infirmities. These are my ordinary companions.

THE UGLY CLUB

Tetrum ante omnia vultum.—Juvenal, "Satires," x. 191.

A visage rough,
Deform'd, unfeatur'd.—*Dryden.*

SINCE our persons are not of our own making, when they are such as appear defective or uncomely, it is, methinks, an honest and laudable fortitude to dare to be ugly; at least to keep ourselves from being abashed with a consciousness of imperfections which we cannot help, and in which there is no guilt. I would not defend a haggard beau for passing away much time at a glass, and giving softness and languishing graces to deformity: all I intend is, that we ought to be contented with our countenance and shape, so far as never to give ourselves an uneasy reflection on that subject. It is to the ordinary people, who are not accustomed to make very proper remarks on any occasion, matter of great jest if a man enters with a prominent pair of shoulders into an assembly, or is distinguished by an expansion of mouth, or obliquity of aspect. It is happy for a man that has any of these oddnesses about him, if he can be as merry upon himself as others are apt to be upon that occasion. When he can possess himself with such a cheerfulness, women and children, who are at first frightened at him, will afterwards be as much pleased with him. As it is barbarous in others to rally him for natural defects, it is extremely agreeable when he can jest upon himself for them.

Madame Maintenon's first husband [1] was a hero in this kind, and has drawn many pleasantries from the irregularity of his shape, which he describes as very much resembling the letter Z. He diverts himself likewise by representing to his reader the make of an engine and pulley, with which he used to take off his hat. When there happens to be anything ridiculous in a visage, and the owner of it thinks it an aspect of dignity, he must

[1] Scarron.

be of very great quality to be exempt from raillery. The best expedient, therefore, is to be pleasant upon himself. Prince Harry and Falstaff, in Shakespeare, have carried the ridicule upon fat and lean as far as it will go. Falstaff is humorously called woolsack, bedpresser, and hill of flesh; Harry, a starveling, an elfskin, a sheath, a bowcase, and a tuck. There is, in several incidents of the conversation between them, the jest still kept up upon the person. Great tenderness and sensibility in this point is one of the greatest weaknesses of self-love. For my own part, I am a little unhappy in the mould of my face, which is not quite so long as it is broad. Whether this might not partly arise from my opening my mouth much seldomer than other people, and by consequence not so much lengthening the fibres of my visage, I am not at leisure to determine. However it be, I have been often put out of countenance by the shortness of my face,[2] and was formerly at great pains in concealing it by wearing a periwig with a high fore-top, and letting my beard grow. But now I have thoroughly got over this delicacy, and could be contented with a much shorter, provided it might qualify me for a member of the merry club, which the following letter gives me an account of. I have received it from Oxford, and as it abounds with the spirit of mirth and good humor, which is natural to that place, I shall set it down word for word as it came to me.

"Most Profound Sir:

"Having been very well entertained, in the last of your speculations that I have yet seen, by your specimen upon clubs, which I therefore hope you will continue, I shall take the liberty to furnish you with a brief account of such a one as, perhaps, you have not seen in all your travels, unless it was your fortune to touch upon some of the woody parts of the African continent, in your voyage to or from Grand Cairo. There have arose in this university (long since you left us without saying anything) several of these inferior hebdomadal societies, as the Punning Club, the Witty Club, and, amongst the rest, the Handsome Club; as a burlesque upon which, a certain merry species that seem to have come into the world in masquerade,

[2] This was made use of by the savage John Dennis in his attack on Steele, who had, he said, "a shape like the picture of somebody over a farmer's chimney." Steele vanquished his surly critic with the suavest good-humor.

for some years last past have associated themselves together, and assumed the name of the Ugly Club. This ill-favored fraternity consists of a president and twelve fellows; the choice of which is not confined by patent to any particular foundation (as St. John's men would have the world believe, and have therefore erected a separate society within themselves), but liberty is left to elect from any school in Great Britain, provided the candidates be within the rules of the club, as set forth in a table entitled, 'The Act of Deformity,' a clause or two of which I shall transmit to you.

"'I. That no person whatsoever shall be admitted without a visible queerity in his aspect, or peculiar cast of countenance; of which the president and officers for the time being are to determine, and the president to have the casting voice.

"'II. That a singular regard be had upon examination to the gibbosity of the gentlemen that offer themselves as founder's kinsmen; or to the obliquity of their figure, in what sort soever.

"'III. That if the quantity of any man's nose be eminently miscalculated, whether as to length or breadth, he shall have a just pretence to be elected.

"'Lastly, That if there shall be two or more competitors for the same vacancy, *cæteris paribus*, he that has the thickest skin to have the preference.'

"Every fresh member, upon his first night, is to entertain the company with a dish of codfish, and a speech in praise of Æsop, whose portraiture they have in full proportion, or rather disproportion, over the chimney; and their design is, as soon as their funds are sufficient, to purchase the heads of Thersites, Duns Scotus,[3] Scarron, Hudibras,[4] and the old gentleman in Oldham,[5] with all the celebrated ill faces of antiquity, as furniture for the clubroom.

"As they have always been professed admirers of the other sex, so they unanimously declare that they will give all possible encouragement to such as will take the benefit of the statute, though none yet have appeared to do it.

[3] The disciples of Aquinas maligned the personal appearance as well as the doctrines of Duns Scotus.

[4] Admitted to the club for the sake of his beard, which was a mixture of whey, orange, and gray.

[5] Ignatius Loyola as described in the third of the "Satires upon the Jesuits" by John Oldham, 1679.

"The worthy president, who is their most devoted champion, has lately shown me two copies of verses, composed by a gentleman of his society; the first, a congratulatory ode, inscribed to Mrs. Touchwood, upon the loss of her two fore-teeth; the other, a panegyric upon Mrs. Andiron's left shoulder. Mrs. Vizard, he says, since the small-pox, has grown tolerably ugly, and a top toast in the club; but I never heard him so lavish of his fine things as upon old Nell Trot, who constantly officiates at their table; her he even adores and extols as the very counterpart of Mother Shipton; in short, Nell, says he, is one of the extraordinary works of nature; but as for complexion, shape, and features, so valued by others, they are all mere outside and symmetry, which is his aversion. Give me leave to add that the president is a facetious, pleasant gentleman, and never more so than when he has got (as he calls them) his dear mummers about him; and he often protests it does him good to meet a fellow with a right genuine grimace in his air (which is so agreeable in the generality of the French nation); and, as an instance of his sincerity in this particular, he gave me a sight of a list in his pocketbook of all this class, who for these five years have fallen under his observation, with himself at the head of them, and in the rear (as one of a promising and improving aspect), Sir,

"Your obliged and humble servant,

"Alexander Carbuncle.

"Oxford, March 12, 1710."

SIR ROGER AND THE WIDOW

Hærent infixi pectore vultus.—Virgil, " Æneid," iv. 4.

Her looks were deep imprinted in his heart.

IN my first description of the company in which I pass most of my time, it may be remembered that I mentioned a great affliction which my friend Sir Roger had met with in his youth, which was no less than a disappointment in love. It happened this evening that we fell into a very pleasing walk at a distance from his house. As soon as we came into it, " It is," quoth the good old man, looking round him with a smile, " very hard that any part of my land should be settled upon one who has used me so ill as the perverse widow [1] did; and yet I am sure I could not see a sprig of any bough of this whole walk of trees, but I should reflect upon her and her severity. She has certainly the finest hand of any woman in the world. You are to know this was the place wherein I used to muse upon her; and by that custom I can never come into it, but the same tender sentiments revive in my mind as if I had actually walked with that beautiful creature under these shades. I have been fool enough to carve her name on the bark of several of these trees; so unhappy is the condition of men in love to attempt the removing of their passion by the methods which serve only to imprint it deeper. She has certainly the finest hand of any woman in the world."

Here followed a profound silence; and I was not displeased to observe my friend falling so naturally into a discourse, which I had ever before taken notice he industriously avoided. After a very long pause, he entered upon an account of this great circumstance in his life, with an air which I thought raised my idea of him above what I had ever had before; and gave me the picture of that cheerful mind of his before it received that stroke

[1] It has been conjectured that the widow—and also, with less probability, the sweetheart alluded to in "Tatler," 181—was Mrs. Catherine Bovey, to whom Steele dedicated the second volume of his " Lady's Library."

which has ever since affected his words and actions. But he went on as follows:

"I came to my estate in my twenty-second year, and resolved to follow the steps of the most worthy of my ancestors who have inhabited this spot of earth before me, in all the methods of hospitality and good neighborhood, for the sake of my fame; and in country sports and recreations, for the sake of my health. In my twenty-third year, I was obliged to serve as Sheriff of my county; and in my servants, officers, and whole equipage, indulged the pleasure of a young man (who did not think ill of his own person) in taking that public occasion of showing my figure and behavior to advantage. You may easily imagine to yourself what appearance I made, who am pretty tall, rode well, and was very well dressed, at the head of a whole county, with music before me, a feather in my hat, and my horse well bitted. I can assure you I was not a little pleased with the kind looks and glances I had from all the balconies and windows as I rode to the hall where the assizes were held. But when I came there, a beautiful creature, in a widow's habit, sat in court to hear the event of a cause concerning her dower. This commanding creature (who was born for the destruction of all who beheld her) put on such a resignation in her countenance, and bore the whispers of all around the court with such a pretty uneasiness, I warrant you, and then recovered herself from one eye to another, until she was perfectly confused by meeting something so wistful in all she encountered, that at last, with a murrain to her, she cast her bewitching eye upon me. I no sooner met it but I bowed, like a great surprised booby; and knowing her cause to be the first which came on, I cried, like a captivated calf as I was, 'Make way for the defendant's witnesses.' This sudden partiality made all the county see the sheriff also was become a slave to the fine widow. During the time her cause was upon trial, she behaved herself, I warrant you, with such a deep attention to her business, took opportunities to have little billets handed to her counsel, then would be in such a pretty confusion, occasioned, you must know, by acting before so much company, that not only I, but the whole court, was prejudiced in her favor; and all that the next heir to her husband had to urge was thought so groundless and frivolous that when it came to her counsel to reply, there was

not half so much said as everyone besides in the court thought he could have urged to her advantage. You must understand, sir, this perverse woman is one of those unaccountable creatures that secretly rejoice in the admiration of men, but indulge themselves in no further consequences. Hence it is that she has ever had a train of admirers, and she removes from her slaves in town to those in the country according to the seasons of the year. She is a reading lady, and far gone in the pleasures of friendship. She is always accompanied by a confidant who is witness to her daily protestations against our sex, and consequently a bar to her first steps towards love, upon the strength of her own maxims and declarations.

"However, I must needs say, this accomplished mistress of mine has distinguished me above the rest, and has been known to declare Sir Roger de Coverley was the tamest and most humane of all the brutes in the country. I was told she said so by one who thought he rallied me; but upon the strength of this slender encouragement of being thought least detestable, I made new liveries, new-paired my coach-horses, sent them all to town to be bitted, and taught to throw their legs well, and move all together, before I pretended to cross the country and wait upon her. As soon as I thought my retinue suitable to the character of my fortune and youth, I set out from hence to make my addresses. The particular skill of this lady has ever been to inflame your wishes, and yet command respect. To make her mistress of this art, she has a greater share of knowledge, wit, and good sense than is usual even among men of merit. Then she is beautiful beyond the race of women. If you will not let her go on with a certain artifice with her eyes, and the skill of beauty, she will arm herself with her real charms, and strike you with admiration instead of desire. It is certain that if you were to behold the whole woman, there is that dignity in her aspect, that composure in her motion, that complacency in her manner, that if her form makes you hope, her merit makes you fear. But then again she is such a desperate scholar that no country gentleman can approach her without being a jest. As I was going to tell you, when I came to her house, I was admitted to her presence with great civility; at the same time she placed herself to be first seen by me in such an attitude as I think you call the posture of a picture, that she dis-

covered new charms, and I at last came towards her with such an awe as made me speechless. This she no sooner observed but she made her advantage of it, and began a discourse to me concerning love and honor, as they both are followed by pretenders, and the real votaries to them. When she discussed these points in a discourse, which I verily believe was as learned as the best philosopher in Europe could possibly make, she asked me whether she was so happy as to fall in with my sentiments on these important particulars. Her confidant sat by her, and upon my being in the last confusion and silence, this malicious aid of hers, turning to her, says, 'I am very glad to observe Sir Roger pauses upon this subject, and seems resolved to deliver all his sentiments upon the matter when he pleases to speak.' They both kept their countenances, and after I had sat half an hour meditating how to behave before such profound casuists, I rose up and took my leave. Chance has since that time thrown me very often in her way, and she as often has directed a discourse to me which I do not understand. This barbarity has kept me ever at a distance from the most beautiful object my eyes ever beheld. It is thus also she deals with all mankind, and you must make love to her, as you would conquer the sphinx, by posing her. But were she like other women, and that there were any talking to her, how constant must the pleasure of that man be who would converse with a creature— But, after all, you may be sure her heart is fixed on some one or other; and yet I have been credibly informed—but who can believe half that is said?—after she had done speaking to me she put her hand to her bosom and adjusted her tucker. Then she cast her eyes a little down upon my beholding her too earnestly. They say she sings excellently: her voice in her ordinary speech has something in it inexpressibly sweet. You must know I dined with her at a public table the day after I first saw her, and she helped me to some tansy in the eye of all the gentlemen in the country. She has certainly the finest hand of any woman in the world. I can assure you, sir, were you to behold her you would be in the same condition; for as her speech is music, her form is angelic. But I find I grow irregular while I am talking of her; but indeed it would be stupidity to be unconcerned at such perfection. Oh, the excellent creature! she is as inimitable to all women as she is inaccessible to all men—"

I found my friend begin to rave, and insensibly led him towards the house that we might be joined by some other company; and am convinced that the widow is the secret cause of all that inconsistency which appears in some parts of my friend's discourse; though he has so much command of himself as not directly to mention her, yet, according to that of Martial, which one knows not how to render into English, *Dum tacet, hanc loquitur;* I shall end this paper with that whole epigram, which represents with much humor my honest friend's condition:—

Quicquid agit Rufus, nihil est nisi Nævia Rufo,
Si gaudet, si flet, si tacet, hanc loquitur:
Cœnat, propinat, poscit, negat, innuit, una est
Nævia: si non sit Nævia, mutus erit.
Scriberet hesternâ patri cum luce salutem,
Nævia lux, inquit, Nævia! lumen, ave.—" Epigrams," i. 69.

" Let Rufus weep, rejoice, stand, sit or walk,
Still he can nothing but of Nævia talk;
Let him eat, drink, ask questions or dispute,
Still he must speak of Nævia, or be mute.
He writ to his father, ending with this line,
I am, my lovely Nævia, ever thine."

THE CHARACTER OF NED SOFTLY

—

NICOLINI AND THE LIONS

—

FANS

—

SIR ROGER AT THE ASSIZES

—

THE VISION OF MIRZA

—

THE ART OF GRINNING

—

SIR ROGER AT THE ABBEY

—

SIR ROGER AT THE PLAY

—

THE TORY FOX-HUNTER

—

BY

JOSEPH ADDISON

JOSEPH ADDISON

1672—1719

Joseph Addison was born at Milston, his father's rectory, in Wiltshire, in 1672. He learned the rudiments of education at schools in the neighborhood of his home, and was then sent to the Charterhouse. At fifteen he was entered at Queen's College, Oxford, but he had not been there many months when a copy of Latin verses, which attracted the notice of Dr. Lancaster, gained him admittance at Magdalen College. As Demy and afterwards as Fellow he resided for ten years at Magdalen, and the college is still proud of his name. During his residence at the university he appears to have concentrated his attention on the study of the Latin poets, and to have had some thought of devoting himself to poetry; his position as Fellow of a college, rich in preferment, would naturally have led him to the Church as a profession, but the influence of the Lord Keeper Somers and of Montague, Chancellor of the Exchequer, together with a pension obtained for him through Lord Somers, determined his choice otherwise. In 1699 he left Oxford and remained on the Continent for more than four years. On his return to England, at the end of 1703, Addison's prospects of employment were for a while clouded by the fall of his friend Lord Somers and rise of Godolphin to power at the accession of Anne. But this exclusion from office did not last long, and in 1706 he was made Under Secretary and employed on a foreign mission. He became afterwards Chief Secretary for Ireland—an office which he filled twice—Secretary to the Lord Justices, and finally, in 1717, Secretary of State. This completes the tale of Addison's public career. It was like his private life—unblemished and stainless in its integrity. He married, in 1716, the Countess of Warwick, and died in 1719, having just completed his forty-seventh year.

As an author, Addison has left poems, among which was the "Campaign," written to celebrate Marlborough's victory at Blenheim; plays, of which the most successful was "Cato;" his "Italian Travels;" and lastly, the immortal papers which have given enduring fame to the "Tatler," "Spectator," "Guardian," and one or two other short-lived periodicals. Addison's style has always been looked upon as the model of classical English. "His prose," in the words of Dr. Johnson, "is the model of the middle style; on grave subjects not formal, on light occasions not grovelling, pure without scrupulosity, and exact without apparent elaboration; always equable and always easy, it was apparently his principal endeavor to avoid all harshness and severity of diction." In delicacy of wit, fertility of imagination, and grace of expression, his best essays, Lord Macaulay truly says, approach near to absolute perfection. Mr. Thackeray holds Addison to have been "one of the most enviable of mankind. A life prosperous and beautiful—a calm death—an immense fame and affection afterwards for his happy and spotless name." The essays selected were contributed to the "Spectator," "Tatler," and "Freeholder," respectively.

THE CHARACTER OF NED SOFTLY

Idem inficeto est inficetior rure,
Simul poemata attigit; neque idem unquam
Æque est beatus, ac poema cum scribit:
Tam gaudet in se, tamque se ipse miratur.
Nimirum idem omnes fallimur; neque est quisquam
Quem non in aliqua re videre Suffenum
Possis. —*Catullus,* "de Suffeno," xx. 14.

Suffenus has no more wit than a mere clown when he attempts to write verses; and yet he is never happier than when he is scribbling: so much does he admire himself and his compositions. And, indeed, this is the foible of every one of us; for there is no man living who is not a Suffenus in one thing or other.

I YESTERDAY came hither about two hours before the company generally make their appearance, with a design to read over all the newspapers; but, upon my sitting down, I was accosted by Ned Softly, who saw me from a corner in the other end of the room, where I found he had been writing something. "Mr. Bickerstaff," says he, "I observe by a late paper of yours, that you and I are just of a humor; for you must know, of all impertinences, there is nothing which I so much hate as news. I never read a gazette in my life; and never trouble my head about our armies, whether they win or lose, or in what part of the world they lie encamped." Without giving me time to reply, he drew a paper of verses out of his pocket, telling me, "that he had something which would entertain me more agreeably; and that he would desire my judgment upon every line, for that we had time enough before us until the company came in."

Ned Softly is a very pretty poet, and a great admirer of easy lines. Waller is his favorite: and as that admirable writer has the best and worst verses of any among our great English poets, Ned Softly has got all the bad ones without book: which he repeats upon occasion, to show his reading, and garnish his

conversation. Ned is indeed a true English reader, incapable of relishing the great and masterly strokes of this art; but wonderfully pleased with the little Gothic ornaments of epigrammatical conceits, turns, points, and quibbles, which are so frequent in the most admired of our English poets, and practised by those who want genius and strength to represent, after the manner of the ancients, simplicity in its natural beauty and perfection.

Finding myself unavoidably engaged in such a conversation, I was resolved to turn my pain into a pleasure, and to divert myself as well as I could with so very odd a fellow. "You must understand," says Ned, "that the sonnet I am going to read to you was written upon a lady, who showed me some verses of her own making, and is, perhaps, the best poet of our age. But you shall hear it." Upon which he began to read as follows:

"TO MIRA, ON HER INCOMPARABLE POEMS.

I

"When dress'd in laurel wreaths you shine,
And tune your soft melodious notes,
You seem a sister of the Nine,
Or Phœbus' self in petticoats.

II

"I fancy, when your song you sing,
(Your song you sing with so much art)
Your pen was pluck'd from Cupid's wing;
For, ah! it wounds me like his dart."

"Why," says I, "this is a little nosegay of conceits, a very lump of salt: every verse has something in it that piques; and then the *dart* in the last line is certainly as pretty a sting in the tail of an epigram, for so I think you critics call it, as ever entered into the thought of a poet." "Dear Mr. Bickerstaff," says he, shaking me by the hand, "everybody knows you to be a judge of these things; and to tell you truly, I read over Roscommon's translation of Horace's 'Art of Poetry' three several times before I sat down to write the sonnet which I have shown you. But you shall hear it again, and pray observe every line of it; for not one of them shall pass without your approbation—

"When dress'd in laurel wreaths you shine.

"That is," says he, "when you have your garland on; when you are writing verses." To which I replied, "I know your meaning; a metaphor!" "The same," said he, and went on—

"And tune your soft melodious notes.

"Pray observe the gliding of that verse; there is scarce a consonant in it; I took care to make it run upon liquids. Give me your opinion of it." "Truly," said I, "I think it as good as the former." "I am very glad to hear you say so," says he, "but mind the next—

"You seem a sister of the Nine.

"That is," says he, "you seem a sister of the muses; for, if you look into ancient authors, you will find it was their opinion that there were nine of them." "I remember it very well," said I; "but pray proceed."

"Or Phœbus' self in petticoats.

"Phœbus," says he, "was the god of poetry. These little instances, Mr. Bickerstaff, show a gentleman's reading. Then, to take off from the air of learning, which Phœbus and the muses had given to this first stanza, you may observe, how it falls all of a sudden into the familiar, 'in petticoats'!

"Let us now," says I, "enter upon the second stanza; I find the first line is still a continuation of the metaphor—

"I fancy, when your song you sing."

"It is very right," says he; "but pray observe the turn of words in those two lines. I was a whole hour in adjusting of them, and have still a doubt upon me whether in the second line it should be, 'Your song you sing;' or, 'You sing your song.' You shall hear them both—

"I fancy, when your song you sing,
(Your song you sing with so much art);

or,

"I fancy, when your song you sing,
(You sing your song with so much art)."

"Truly," said I, "the turn is so natural either way, that you have made me almost giddy with it." "Dear sir," said he,

grasping me by the hand, "you have a great deal of patience; but pray what do you think of the next verse—

"Your pen was pluck'd from Cupid's wing."

"Think!" says I, "I think you have made Cupid look like a little goose." "That was my meaning," says he, "I think the ridicule is well enough hit off. But we come now to the last, which sums up the whole matter—

"For, ah! it wounds me like his dart.

"Pray how do you like that 'Ah!' doth it not make a pretty figure in that place? 'Ah!'—it looks as if I felt the dart, and cried out as being pricked with it—

"For, ah! it wounds me like his dart.

"My friend, Dick Easy," continued he, "assured me he would rather have written that 'Ah!' than to have been the author of the 'Æneid.' He indeed objected, that I made Mira's pen like a quill in one of the lines, and like a dart in the other. But as to that—" "Oh! as to that," says I, "it is but supposing Cupid to be like a porcupine, and his quills and darts will be the same thing." He was going to embrace me for the hint; but half a dozen critics coming into the room, whose faces he did not like, he conveyed the sonnet into his pocket, and whispered me in the ear, "he would show it me again as soon as his man had written it over fair."

NICOLINI AND THE LIONS

Dic mihi, si fueris tu leo, qualis eris?—Mart.

Were you a lion, how would you behave?

THERE is nothing that of late years has afforded matter of greater amusement to the town than Signor Nicolini's [1] combat with a lion in the Haymarket, which has been very often exhibited to the general satisfaction of most of the nobility and gentry in the kingdom of Great Britain. Upon the first rumor of his intended combat, it was confidently affirmed, and is still believed, by many in both galleries, that there would be a tame lion sent from the Tower every opera night in order to be killed by Hydaspes.[2] This report, though altogether groundless, so universally prevailed in the upper regions of the playhouse that some of the most refined politicians in those parts of the audience gave it out in whisper that the lion was a cousin-german of the tiger who made his appearance in King William's days, and that the stage would be supplied with lions at the public expense during the whole session. Many likewise were the conjectures of the treatment which this lion was to meet with from the hands of Signor Nicolini; some supposed that he was to subdue him *in recitativo*, as Orpheus used to serve the wild beasts in his time, and afterwards to knock him on the head; some fancied that the lion would not pretend to lay his paws upon the hero, by reason of the received opinion, that a lion will not hurt a virgin. Several, who pretended to have seen the opera in Italy, had informed their friends that the lion was to act a part in high Dutch, and roar twice or thrice to a thorough bass before he fell at the

[1] The Cavaliere Nicolino Grimaldi, a Neapolitan, came to London in 1708. He performed first in "Pyrrhus and Demetrius" in 1710, the last of the mongrel Anglo-Italian operas. In 1712 he left England, after gaining the name of being "the greatest performer in dramatick music that is now living, or that perhaps ever appeared on a stage" ("Spectator," 405). He is alluded to by Addison in "Spectator," 5, as acting in the opera "Rinaldo" by "Mynheer Handel."

[2] An opera by Francesco Mancini, produced at the Haymarket, 1710.

feet of Hydaspes. To clear up a matter that was so variously reported, I have made it my business to examine whether this pretended lion is really the savage he appears to be, or only a counterfeit.

But before I communicate my discoveries, I must acquaint the reader, that upon my walking behind the scenes last winter, as I was thinking on something else, I accidentally jostled against a monstrous animal that extremely startled me, and, upon my nearer survey of it, appeared to be a lion rampant. The lion seeing me very much surprised told me, in a gentle voice, that I might come by him if I pleased; "for," says he, "I do not intend to hurt anybody." I thanked him very kindly, and passed by him: and in a little time after saw him leap upon the stage, and act his part with very great applause. It has been observed by several that the lion has changed his manner of acting twice or thrice since his first appearance; which will not seem strange when I acquaint my reader that the lion has been changed upon the audience three several times. The first lion was a candle-snuffer, who, being a fellow of a testy, choleric temper, overdid his part, and would not suffer himself to be killed as easily as he ought to have done; besides, it was observed of him, that he grew more surly every time that he came out of the lion; and having dropt some words in ordinary conversation, as if he had not fought his best, and that he suffered himself to be thrown upon his back in the scuffle, and that he would wrestle with Mr. Nicolini for what he pleased, out of his lion's skin, it was thought proper to discard him: and it is verily believed to this day, that had he been brought upon the stage another time, he would certainly have done mischief. Besides, it was objected against the first lion, that he reared himself so high upon his hinder paws, and walked in so erect a posture, that he looked more like an old man than a lion.

The second lion was a tailor by trade, who belonged to the playhouse, and had the character of a mild and peaceable man in his profession. If the former was too furious, this was too sheepish for his part; insomuch, that after a short modest walk upon the stage, he would fall at the first touch of Hydaspes, without grappling with him, and giving him an opportunity of showing his variety of Italian trips. It is said, indeed, that he once gave him a rip in his flesh-colored doublet: but this was

only to make work for himself, in his private character of a tailor. I must not omit that it was this second lion who treated me with so much humanity behind the scenes.

The acting lion at present is, as I am informed, a country gentleman, who does it for his diversion, but desires his name may be concealed. He says very handsomely in his own excuse, that he does not act for gain, that he indulges an innocent pleasure in it; and that it is better to pass away an evening in this manner than in gaming and drinking: but at the same time says, with a very agreeable raillery upon himself, that if his name should be known, the ill-natured world might call him, "The ass in the lion's skin." This gentleman's temper is made out of such a happy mixture of the mild and the choleric that he outdoes both his predecessors, and has drawn together greater audiences than have been known in the memory of man.

I must not conclude my narrative without first taking notice of a groundless report that has been raised to a gentleman's disadvantage of whom I must declare myself an admirer; namely, that Signor Nicolini and the lion have been seen setting peaceably by one another, and smoking a pipe together behind the scenes; by which their common enemies would insinuate that it is but a sham combat which they represent upon the stage; but upon inquiry I find, that if any such correspondence has passed between them, it was not till the combat was over, when the lion was to be looked upon as dead, according to the received rules of the drama. Besides, this is what is practised every day in Westminster Hall, where nothing is more usual than to see a couple of lawyers, who have been tearing each other to pieces in the court, embracing one another as soon as they are out of it.

I would not be thought in any part of this relation to reflect upon Signor Nicolini, who in acting this part only complies with the wretched taste of his audience; he knows very well that the lion has many more admirers than himself; as they say of the famous equestrian statue on the Pont-Neuf at Paris, that more people go to see the horse than the king who sits upon it. On the contrary, it gives me a just indignation to see a person whose action gives new majesty to kings, resolution to heroes, and softness to lovers, thus sinking from the greatness of his behavior, and degraded into the character of the London 'prentice.

I have often wished that our tragedians would copy after this great master of action. Could they make the same use of their arms and legs, and inform their faces with as significant looks and passions, how glorious would an English tragedy appear with that action, which is capable of giving dignity to the forced thoughts, cold conceits, and unnatural expressions of an Italian opera! In the meantime, I have related this combat of the lion, to show what are at present the reigning entertainments of the politer part of Great Britain.

Audiences have often been reproached by writers for the coarseness of their tastes, but our present grievance does not seem to be the want of a good taste, but of common sense.

FANS

Lusus animo debent aliquando dari,
Ad cogitandum melior ut redeat sibi.
—*Phædrus,* "Fables," xiv. 5.

The mind ought sometimes to be diverted, that it may return the better to thinking.

I DO not know whether to call the following letter a satire upon coquettes, or a representation of their several fantastical accomplishments, or what other title to give it; but, as it is, I shall communicate it to the public. It will sufficiently explain its own intentions, so that I shall give it my reader at length, without either preface or postscript:

"MR. SPECTATOR:

"Women are armed with fans as men with swords, and sometimes do more execution with them. To the end therefore that ladies may be entire mistresses of the weapons which they bear, I have erected an academy for the training up of young women in the exercise of the fan, according to the most fashionable airs and motions that are now practised at court. The ladies who carry fans under me are drawn up twice a day in my great hall, where they are instructed in the use of their arms, and exercised by the following words of command:—Handle your fans, Unfurl your fans, Discharge your fans, Ground your fans, Recover your fans, Flutter your fans. By the right observation of these few plain words of command, a woman of a tolerable genius, who will apply herself diligently to her exercise for the space of but one half-year, shall be able to give her fan all the graces that can possibly enter into that little modish machine.

"But to the end that my readers may form to themselves a right notion of this exercise, I beg leave to explain it to them in all its parts. When my female regiment is drawn up in array, with everyone her weapon in her hand, upon my giving

the word to handle their fans, each of them shakes her fan at me with a smile, then gives her right-hand woman a tap upon the shoulder, then presses her lips with the extremity of her fan, then lets her arms fall in an easy motion, and stands in readiness to receive the next word of command. All this is done with a close fan, and is generally learned in the first week.

" The next motion is that of unfurling the fan, in which are comprehended several little flirts and vibrations, as also gradual and deliberate openings, with many voluntary fallings asunder in the fan itself, that are seldom learned under a month's practice. This part of the exercise pleases the spectators more than any other, as it discovers on a sudden an infinite number of cupids, garlands, altars, birds, beasts, rainbows, and the like agreeable figures, that display themselves to view, whilst everyone in the regiment holds a picture in her hand.

" Upon my giving the word to discharge their fans, they give one general crack that may be heard at a considerable distance when the wind sits fair. This is one of the most difficult parts of the exercise, but I have several ladies with me, who at their first entrance could not give a pop loud enough to be heard at the farther end of a room, who can now discharge a fan in such a manner, that it shall make a report like a pocket-pistol. I have likewise taken care (in order to hinder young women from letting off their fans in wrong places or on unsuitable occasions) to show upon what subject the crack of a fan may come in properly: I have likewise invented a fan, with which a girl of sixteen, by the help of a little wind which is enclosed about one of the largest sticks, can make as loud a crack as a woman of fifty with an ordinary fan.

" When the fans are thus discharged, the word of command in course is to ground their fans. This teaches a lady to quit her fan gracefully when she throws it aside in order to take up a pack of cards, adjust a curl of hair, replace a falling pin, or apply herself to any other matter of importance. This part of the exercise, as it only consists in tossing a fan with an air upon a long table (which stands by for that purpose), may be learned in two days' time as well as in a twelvemonth.

" When my female regiment is thus disarmed, I generally let them walk about the room for some time; when on a sudden (like ladies that look upon their watches after a long visit) they

all of them hasten to their arms, catch them up in a hurry, and place themselves in their proper stations upon my calling out, Recover your fans. This part of the exercise is not difficult, provided a woman applies her thoughts to it.

"The fluttering of the fan is the last, and indeed the masterpiece of the whole exercise; but if a lady does not misspend her time, she may make herself mistress of it in three months. I generally lay aside the dog-days and the hot time of the summer for the teaching of this part of the exercise; for as soon as ever I pronounce, Flutter your fans, the place is filled with so many zephyrs and gentle breezes as are very refreshing in that season of the year, though they might be dangerous to ladies of a tender constitution in any other.

"There is an infinite variety of motions to be made use of in the flutter of a fan. There is the angry flutter, the modest flutter, the timorous flutter, the confused flutter, the merry flutter, and the amorous flutter. Not to be tedious, there is scarce any emotion in the mind which does not produce a suitable agitation in the fan; insomuch, that if I only see the fan of a disciplined lady, I know very well whether she laughs, frowns, or blushes. I have seen a fan so very angry, that it would have been dangerous for the absent lover who provoked it to have come within the wind of it; and at other times so very languishing, that I have been glad for the lady's sake the lover was at sufficient distance from it. I need not add, that a fan is either a prude or coquette, according to the nature of the person who bears it. To conclude my letter, I must acquaint you that I have from my own observations compiled a little treatise for the use of my scholars, entitled, The Passions of the Fan; which I will communicate to you, if you think it may be of use to the public. I shall have a general review on Thursday next; to which you shall be very welcome if you will honor it with your presence.

"I am, etc.

"P.S. I teach young gentlemen the whole art of gallanting a fan.

"N.B. I have several little plain fans made for this use, to avoid expense."

SIR ROGER AT THE ASSIZES

Comes jucundus in via pro vehiculo est.—Publ. Syr. "Frag."

An agreeable companion upon the road is as good as a coach.

A MAN'S first care should be to avoid the reproaches of of his own heart; his next, to escape the censures of the world. If the last interferes with the former, it ought to be entirely neglected; but otherwise there cannot be a greater satisfaction to an honest mind than to see those approbations which it gives itself seconded by the applauses of the public. A man is more sure of his conduct when the verdict which he passes upon his own behavior is thus warranted and confirmed by the opinion of all that know him.

My worthy friend Sir Roger is one of those who is not only at peace within himself, but beloved and esteemed by all about him. He receives a suitable tribute for his universal benevolence to mankind in the returns of affection and goodwill which are paid him by everyone that lives within his neighborhood. I lately met with two or three odd instances of that general respect which is shown to the good old knight. He would needs carry Will Wimble and myself with him to the country assizes. As we were upon the road, Will Wimble joined a couple of plain men who rid before us, and conversed with them for some time, during which my friend Sir Roger acquainted me with their characters.

"The first of them," says he, "that has a spaniel by his side, is a yeoman of about £100 a year, an honest man. He is just within the Game Act, and qualified to kill a hare or a pheasant. He knocks down his dinner with his gun twice or thrice a week; and by that means lives much cheaper than those who have not so good an estate as himself. He would be a good neighbor if he did not destroy so many partridges. In short, he is a very sensible man, shoots flying, and has been several times foreman of the petty jury.

" The other that rides along with him is Tom Touchy, a fellow famous for 'taking the law' of everybody. There is not one in the town where he lives that he has not sued at a quarter-sessions. The rogue had once the impudence to go to law with the widow. His head is full of costs, damages, and ejectments. He plagued a couple of honest gentlemen so long for a trespass in breaking one of his hedges, till he was forced to sell the ground it enclosed to defray the charges of the prosecution. His father left him fourscore pounds a year; but he has cast and been cast so often that he is not now worth thirty. I suppose he is going upon the old business of the willow-tree."

As Sir Roger was giving me this account of Tom Touchy, Will Wimble and his two companions stopped short till we came up to them. After having paid their respects to Sir Roger, Will told him that Mr. Touchy and he must appeal to him upon a dispute that arose between them. Will, it seems, had been giving his fellow-traveller an account of his angling one day in such a hole, when Tom Touchy, instead of hearing out his story, told him that Mr. Such-a-one, if he pleased, might " take the law of him " for fishing in that part of the river. My friend Sir Roger heard them both upon a round trot; and after having paused some time, told them, with the air of a man who would not give his judgment rashly, that " much might be said on both sides." They were neither of them dissatisfied with the knight's determination, because neither of them found himself in the wrong by it. Upon which we made the best of our way to the assizes.

The court was sat before Sir Roger came; but notwithstanding all the justices had taken their places upon the bench, they made room for the old knight at the head of them; who, for his reputation in the country, took occasion to whisper in the judge's ear, " that he was glad his lordship had met with so much good weather in his circuit." I was listening to the proceeding of the court with much attention, and infinitely pleased with that great appearance of solemnity which so properly accompanies such a public administration of our laws; when, after about an hour's sitting, I observed, to my great surprise, in the midst of a trial, that my friend Sir Roger was getting up to speak. I was in some pain for him, until I found he had acquitted him-

self of two or three sentences, with a look of much business and great intrepidity.

Upon his first rising the court was hushed, and a general whisper ran among the country people that Sir Roger "was up." The speech he made was so little to the purpose that I shall not trouble my readers with an account of it; and I believe was not so much designed by the knight himself to inform the court, as to give him a figure in my eye, and keep up his credit in the country.

I was highly delighted, when the court rose, to see the gentlemen of the country gathering about my old friend, and striving who should compliment him most; at the same time that the ordinary people gazed upon him at a distance, not a little admiring his courage that was not afraid to speak to the judge.

In our return home we met with a very odd accident, which I cannot forbear relating, because it shows how desirous all who know Sir Roger are of giving him marks of their esteem. When we arrived upon the verge of his estate, we stopped at a little inn to rest ourselves and our horses. The man of the house had, it seems, been formerly a servant in the knight's family; and to do honor to his old master, had some time since, unknown to Sir Roger, put him up in a sign-post before the door; so that the knight's head had hung out upon the road about a week before he himself knew anything of the matter. As soon as Sir Roger was acquainted with it, finding that his servant's indiscretion proceeded wholly from affection and goodwill, he only told him that he had made him too high a compliment; and when the fellow seemed to think that could hardly be, added with a more decisive look, that it was too great an honor for any man under a duke; but told him at the same time that it might be altered with a very few touches, and that he himself would be at the charge of it. Accordingly they got a painter by the knight's directions to add a pair of whiskers to the face, and by a little aggravation of the features to change it into the Saracen's Head. I should not have known this story had not the innkeeper, upon Sir Roger's alighting, told him in my hearing that his honor's head was brought back last night with the alterations that he had ordered to be made in it. Upon this, my friend, with his usual cheerfulness, related the particulars above mentioned, and ordered the head to be brought into the room.

I could not forbear discovering greater expressions of mirth than ordinary upon the appearance of this monstrous face, under which, notwithstanding it was made to frown and stare in a most extraordinary manner, I could still discover a distant resemblance to my old friend. Sir Roger, upon seeing me laugh, desired me to tell him truly if I thought it possible for people to know him in that disguise. I at first kept my usual silence; but upon the knight's conjuring me to tell him whether it was not still more like himself than a Saracen, I composed my countenance in the best manner I could, and replied that "much might be said on both sides."

These several adventures, with the knight's behavior in them, gave me as pleasant a day as ever I met with in any of my travels.

THE VISION OF MIRZA

Omnem, quæ nunc obducta tuenti
Mortales hebetat visus tibi, et humida circum
Caligat, nubem eripiam. —*Virgil*, "Æneid," ii. 604.

The cloud, which, intercepting the clear light,
Hangs o'er thy eyes, and blunts thy mortal sight,
I will remove.

WHEN I was at Grand Cairo, I picked up several oriental manuscripts, which I have still by me. Among others I met with one entitled "*The Visions of Mirza*," which I have read over with great pleasure. I intend to give it to the public when I have no other entertainment for them, and shall begin with the first vision, which I have translated word for word, as follows:—

"On the fifth day of the moon, which according to the custom of my forefathers I always keep holy, after having washed myself and offered up my morning devotions, I ascended the high hills of Bagdad, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer. As I was here airing myself on the tops of the mountains, I fell into a profound contemplation on the vanity of human life, and passing from one thought to another, 'Surely,' said I, 'man is but a shadow, and life a dream.' Whilst I was thus musing, I cast my eyes towards the summit of a rock that was not far from me, where I discovered one in the habit of a shepherd, with a little musical instrument in his hand. As I looked upon him he applied it to his lips, and began to play upon it. The sound of it was exceeding sweet, and wrought into a variety of tunes that were inexpressibly melodious and altogether different from anything I had ever heard. They put me in mind of those heavenly airs that are played to the departed souls of good men upon their first arrival in Paradise, to wear out the impressions of the last agonies,

and qualify them for the pleasures of that happy place. My heart melted away in secret raptures.

"I had been often told that the rock before me was the haunt of a genius; and that several had been entertained with music who had passed by it, but never heard that the musician had before made himself visible. When he had raised my thoughts by those transporting airs which he played, to taste the pleasures of his conversation, as I looked upon him like one astonished, he beckoned to me, and by the waving of his hand directed me to approach the place where he sat. I drew near with that reverence which is due to a superior nature; and as my heart was entirely subdued by the captivating strains I had heard, I fell down at his feet and wept. The genius smiled upon me with a look of compassion and affability that familiarized him to my imagination, and at once dispelled all the fears and apprehensions with which I approached him. He lifted me from the ground, and taking me by the hand, 'Mirza,' said he, 'I have heard thee in thy soliloquies; follow me.'

"He then led me to the highest pinnacle of the rock, and placing me on the top of it, 'Cast thy eyes eastward,' said he, 'and tell me what thou seest.' 'I see,' said I, 'a huge valley and a prodigious tide of water rolling through it.' 'The valley that thou seest,' said he, 'is the Vale of Misery, and the tide of water that thou seest is part of the great tide of eternity.' 'What is the reason,' said I, 'that the tide I see rises out of a thick mist at one end, and again loses itself in a thick mist at the other?' 'What thou seest,' said he, 'is that portion of eternity which is called time, measured out by the sun, and reaching from the beginning of the world to its consummation. Examine now,' said he, 'this sea that is thus bounded with darkness at both ends, and tell me what thou discoverest in it.' 'I see a bridge,' said I, 'standing in the midst of the tide.' 'The bridge thou seest,' said he, 'is human life; consider it attentively.' Upon a more leisurely survey of it I found that it consisted of more than threescore and ten entire arches, with several broken arches, which, added to those that were entire, made up the number to about a hundred. As I was counting the arches, the genius told me that this bridge consisted at first of a thousand arches; but that a great flood swept away the rest, and left the bridge in the ruinous condition I now beheld it. 'But

tell me further,' said he, 'what thou discoverest on it.' 'I see multitudes of people passing over it,' said I, 'and a black cloud hanging on each end of it.' As I looked more attentively, I saw several of the passengers dropping through the bridge into the great tide that flowed underneath it; and upon further examination, perceived there were innumerable trap-doors that lay concealed in the bridge, which the passengers no sooner trod upon, but they fell through them into the tide and immediately disappeared. These hidden pitfalls were set very thick at the entrance of the bridge, so that throngs of people no sooner broke through the cloud, but many of them fell into them. They grew thinner towards the middle, but multiplied and lay closer together towards the end of the arches that were entire.

"There were indeed some persons, but their number was very small, that continued a kind of hobbling march on the broken arches, but fell through one after another, being quite tired and spent with so long a walk.

"I passed some time in the contemplation of this wonderful structure, and the great variety of objects which it presented. My heart was filled with a deep melancholy to see several dropping unexpectedly in the midst of mirth and jollity, and catching at everything that stood by them to save themselves. Some were looking up towards the heavens in a thoughtful posture, and in the midst of a speculation stumbled and fell out of sight. Multitudes were very busy in the pursuit of bubbles that glittered in their eyes and danced before them, but often when they thought themselves within the reach of them their footing failed and down they sunk. In this confusion of objects, I observed some with scimitars in their hands, and others with urinals, who ran to and fro upon the bridge, thrusting several persons on trap-doors which did not seem to lie in their way, and which they might have escaped had they not been thus forced upon them.

"The genius, seeing me indulge myself on this melancholy prospect, told me I had dwelt long enough upon it. 'Take thine eyes off the bridge,' said he, 'and tell me if thou yet seest anything thou dost not comprehend.' Upon looking up, 'What mean,' said I, 'those great flights of birds that are perpetually hovering about the bridge, and settling upon it from time to time? I see vultures, harpies, ravens, cormorants, and among

many other feathered creatures several little winged boys that perch in great numbers upon the middle arches.' 'These,' said the genius, 'are Envy, Avarice, Superstition, Despair, Love, with the like cares and passions that infest human life.'

"I here fetched a deep sigh. 'Alas,' said I, 'man was made in vain: how is he given away to misery and mortality, tortured in life, and swallowed up in death!' The genius being moved with compassion towards me, bid me quit so uncomfortable a prospect. 'Look no more,' said he, 'on man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting out for eternity; but cast thine eye on that thick mist into which the tide bears the several generations of mortals that fall into it.' I directed my sight as I was ordered, and (whether or no the good genius strengthened it with any supernatural force, or dissipated part of the mist that was before too thick for eye to penetrate) I saw the valley opening at the farther end, and spreading forth into an immense ocean that had a huge rock of adamant running through the midst of it, and dividing it into two equal parts. The clouds still rested on one half of it, insomuch that I could discover nothing in it; but the other appeared to me a vast ocean planted with innumerable islands, that were covered with fruits and flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little shining seas that ran among them. I could see persons dressed in glorious habits with garlands upon their heads, passing among the trees, lying down by the sides of fountains, or resting on beds of flowers; and could hear a confused harmony of singing birds, falling waters, human voices, and musical instruments. Gladness grew in me upon the discovery of so delightful a scene. I wished for the wings of an eagle that I might fly away to those happy seats; but the genius told me there was no passage to them except through the gates of death that I saw opening every moment upon the bridge. 'The islands,' said he, 'that lie so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole face of the ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the sands on the seashore; there are myriads of islands behind those which thou here discoverest, reaching farther than thine eye, or even thine imagination can extend itself. These are the mansions of good men after death, who, according to the degree and kinds of virtue in which they excelled, are distributed among these several islands, which abound with

pleasures of different kinds and degrees suitable to the relishes and perfections of those who are settled in them; every island is a paradise accommodated to its respective inhabitants. Are not these, O Mirza, habitations worth contending for? Does life appear miserable that gives thee opportunities of earning such a reward? Is death to be feared that will convey thee to so happy an existence? Think not man was made in vain who has such an eternity reserved for him.' I gazed with inexpressible pleasure on these happy islands. At length, said I, 'Show me now, I beseech thee, the secrets that lie hid under those dark clouds which cover the ocean on the other side of the rock of adamant.' The genius making me no answer, I turned me about to address myself to him a second time, but I found that he had left me; I then turned again to the vision which I had been so long contemplating; but, instead of the rolling tide, the arched bridge, and the happy islands, I saw nothing but the long valley of Bagdad, with oxen, sheep, and camels grazing upon the sides of it."

(*The end of the First Vision of Mirza*)

THE ART OF GRINNING

Remove fera monstra, tuæque
Saxificos vultus, quæcunque ea, tolle Medusæ.
—*Ovid*, " Metamorphoses," v. 216.

Hence with those monstrous features, and, O! spare
That Gorgon's look, and petrifying stare.—*P.*

IN a late paper I mentioned the project of an ingenious author for the erecting of several handicraft prizes to be contended for by our British artisans, and the influence they might have towards the improvement of our several manufactures. I have since that been very much surprised by the following advertisement, which I find in the " Post-Boy " [1] of the eleventh instant, and again repeated in the " Post-Boy " of the fifteenth :—

" On the ninth of October next will be run for upon Coleshill-heath in Warwickshire, a plate of six guineas value, three heats, by any horse, mare, or gelding, that hath not won above the value of £5, the winning horse to be sold for £10. To carry ten stone weight, if fourteen hands high; if above or under to carry or be allowed weight for inches, and to be entered Friday the fifteenth at the Swan in Coleshill, before six in the evening. Also a plate of less value to be run for by asses. The same day a gold ring to be grinned for by men."

The first of these diversions that is to be exhibited by the £10 racehorses, may probably have its use; but the two last, in which the asses and men are concerned, seem to me altogether extraordinary and unaccountable. Why they should keep running asses at Coleshill, or how making mouths turns to account in Warwickshire, more than in any other parts of England, I cannot comprehend. I have looked over all the Olympic games, and do not find anything in them like an ass-race, or a match at grinning. However it be, I am informed that several asses

[1] A triweekly which began in May, 1695.

are now kept in body-clothes, and sweated every morning upon the heath; and that all the country-fellows within ten miles of the Swan grin an hour or two in their glasses every morning, in order to qualify themselves for the ninth of October. The prize which is proposed to be grinned for has raised such an ambition among the common people of out-grinning one another, that many very discerning persons are afraid it should spoil most of the faces in the county; and that a Warwickshire man will be known by his grin, as Roman Catholics imagine a Kentish man is by his tail. The gold ring, which is made the prize of deformity, is just the reverse of the golden apple that was formerly made the prize of beauty, and should carry for its poesy the old motto inverted:

"Detur tetriori."

Or, to accommodate it to the capacity of the combatants,

"The frightfull'st grinner
Be the winner."

In the mean while I would advise a Dutch painter to be present at this great controversy of faces, in order to make a collection of the most remarkable grins that shall be there exhibited.

I must not here omit an account which I lately received of one of these grinning-matches from a gentleman, who, upon reading the above-mentioned advertisement, entertained a coffee-house with the following narrative:—Upon the taking of Namur,[2] amidst other public rejoicings made on that occasion, there was a gold ring given by a whig justice of peace to be grinned for. The first competitor that entered the lists was a black swarthy Frenchman, who accidentally passed that way, and being a man naturally of a withered look, and hard features, promised himself good success. He was placed upon a table in the great point of view, and looking upon the company like Milton's death,

"Grinn'd horribly a ghastly smile."

His muscles were so drawn together on each side of his face, that he showed twenty teeth at a grin, and put the country in

[2] Captured by William in 1695.

some pain, lest a foreigner should carry away the honor of the day; but upon a further trial they found he was master only of the merry grin.

The next that mounted the table was a malcontent in those days, and a great master in the whole art of grinning, but particularly excelled in the angry grin. He did his part so well that he is said to have made half a dozen women miscarry; but the justice being apprised by one who stood near him that the fellow who grinned in his face was a Jacobite, and being unwilling that a disaffected person should win the gold ring, and be looked upon as the best grinner in the country, he ordered the oaths to be tendered unto him upon his quitting the table, which, the grinner refusing, he was set aside as an unqualified person. There were several other grotesque figures that presented themselves, which it would be too tedious to describe. I must not however omit a ploughman, who lived in the farther part of the country, and being very lucky in a pair of long lantern-jaws,[3] wrung his face into such a hideous grimace, that every feature of it appeared under a different distortion. The whole company stood astonished at such a complicated grin, and were ready to assign the prize to him, had it not been proved by one of his antagonists that he had practised with verjuice for some days before, and had a crab found upon him at the very time of grinning; upon which the best judges of grinning declared it as their opinion that he was not to be looked upon as a fair grinner, and therefore ordered him to be set aside as a cheat.

The prize it seems at length fell upon a cobbler, Giles Gorgon by name, who produced several new grins of his own invention, having been used to cut faces for many years together over his last. At the very first grin he cast every human feature out of his countenance, at the second he became the face of a spout, at the third a baboon, at the fourth a head of a bass-viol, and at the fifth a pair of nut-crackers. The whole assembly wondered at his accomplishments, and bestowed the ring upon him unanimously; but, what he esteemed more than all the rest, a country wench, whom he had wooed in vain for above five years before, was so charmed with his grins, and the applauses which he re-

[3] "A term used of a thin visage, such as if a candle were burning in the mouth might transmit the light" (Johnson).

ceived on all sides, that she married him the week following, and to this day wears the prize upon her finger, the cobbler having made use of it as his wedding-ring.

This paper might perhaps seem very impertinent, if it grew serious in the conclusion. I would nevertheless leave to the consideration of those who are the patrons of this monstrous trial of skill, whether or no they are not guilty, in some measure, of an affront to their species, in treating after this manner the "human face divine," and turning that part of us, which has so great an image impressed upon it, into the image of a monkey; whether the raising such silly competitions among the ignorant, proposing prizes for such useless accomplishments, filling the common people's heads with such senseless ambitions, and inspiring them with such absurd ideas of superiority and preeminence, has not in it something immoral as well as ridiculous.

SIR ROGER AT THE ABBEY

Ire tamen restat Numa quò devenit et Ancus.—Horace, "Ep." i. 6, 27.

With Ancus, and with Numa, kings of Rome,
We must descend into the silent tomb.

MY friend Sir Roger de Coverley told me t'other night, that he had been reading my paper [1] upon Westminster Abbey, in which, says he, there are a great many ingenious fancies. He told me at the same time that he observed I had promised another paper upon the tombs, and that he should be glad to go and see them with me, not having visited them since he had read history. I could not imagine how this came into the knight's head, till I recollected that he had been very busy all last summer upon "Baker's Chronicle," which he has quoted several times in his disputes with Sir Andrew Freeport since his last coming to town. Accordingly, I promised to call upon him the next morning, that we might go together to the abbey.

I found the knight under his butler's hands, who always shaves him. He was no sooner dressed than he called for a glass of the Widow Trueby's water, which he told me he always drank before he went abroad. He recommended to me a dram of it at the same time, with so much heartiness, that I could not forbear drinking it. As soon as I had got it down, I found it very unpalatable; upon which the knight, observing that I had made several wry faces, told me that he knew I should not like it at first, but that it was the best thing in the world against the stone or gravel.

I could have wished indeed that he had acquainted me with the virtues of it sooner; but it was too late to complain, and I knew what he had done was out of goodwill. Sir Roger told me further, that he looked upon it to be very good for a man whilst he stayed in town, to keep off infection, and that he got

[1] "Spectator," 26.

together a quantity of it upon the first news of the sickness being at Dantzic: when, of a sudden, turning short to one of his servants, who stood behind him, he bid him call a hackney-coach and take care it was an elderly man that drove it.

He then resumed his discourse upon Mrs. Trueby's water, telling me that the Widow Trueby was one who did more good than all the doctors and apothecaries in the county; that she distilled every poppy that grew within five miles of her; that she distributed her water gratis among all sorts of people: to which the knight added that she had a very great jointure, and that the whole country would fain have it a match between him and her; "and truly," says Sir Roger, "if I had not been engaged, perhaps I could not have done better."

His discourse was broken off by his man's telling him he had called a coach. Upon our going to it, after having cast his eye upon the wheels, he asked the coachman if his axle-tree was good: upon the fellow's telling him he would warrant it, the knight turned to me, told me he looked like an honest man, and went in without further ceremony.

We had not gone far, when Sir Roger, popping out his head, called the coachman down from his box, and upon presenting himself at the window, asked him if he smoked. As I was considering what this would end in, he bid him stop by the way at any good tobacconist's, and take in a roll of their best Virginia. Nothing material happened in the remaining part of our journey, till we were set down at the west end of the abbey.

As we went up the body of the church, the knight pointed at the trophies upon one of the new monuments, and cried out, "A brave man, I warrant him!" Passing afterwards by Sir Cloudsley Shovel,[2] he flung his hand that way, and cried "Sir Cloudsley Shovel! a very gallant man." As we stood before Busby's [3] tomb, the knight uttered himself again after the same manner: "Dr. Busby! a great man: he whipped my grandfather; a very great man! I should have gone to him myself, if I had not been a blockhead—a very great man!"

We were immediately conducted into the little chapel on the right hand. Sir Roger, planting himself at our historian's elbow, was very attentive to everything he said, particularly to

[2] Drowned off the Scilly Isles, October 22, 1707.

[3] Headmaster of Westminster (b. 1606, d. 1695).

the account he gave us of the lord who had cut off the King of Morocco's head. Among several other figures, he was very well pleased to see the statesman Cecil upon his knees; and concluding them all to be great men, was conducted to the figure which represents that martyr to good housewifery [4] who died by the prick of a needle. Upon our interpreter's telling us that she was a maid-of-honor to Queen Elizabeth, the knight was very inquisitive into her name and family; and, after having regarded her finger for some time, "I wonder," says he, "that Sir Richard Baker has said nothing of her in his Chronicle."

We were then conveyed to the two coronation chairs,[5] where my old friend, after having heard that the stone underneath the most ancient of them, which was brought from Scotland, was called Jacob's pillow, sat himself down in the chair, and, looking like the figure of an old Gothic king, asked our interpreter, what authority they had to say that Jacob had ever been in Scotland? The fellow, instead of returning him an answer, told him, that he hoped his honor would pay his forfeit. I could observe Sir Roger a little ruffled upon being thus trepanned, but our guide not insisting upon his demand, the knight soon recovered his good humor, and whispered in my ear, that if Will Wimble were with us, and saw those two chairs, it would go hard but he would get a tobacco stopper out of one or t'other of them.

Sir Roger, in the next place, laid his hand upon Edward III's sword, and, leaning upon the pommel of it, gave us the whole history of the Black Prince; concluding, that, in Sir Richard Baker's opinion, Edward III was one of the greatest princes that ever sat upon the English throne.

We were then shown Edward the Confessor's tomb; upon which Sir Roger acquainted us, that he was the first who touched for the evil: and afterwards Henry IV's; upon which he shook his head, and told us there was fine reading in the casualties of that reign.

Our conductor then pointed to that monument where there is the figure of one of our English kings without a head; [6] and

[4] Lady Elizabeth Russel, one of whose sisters married Lord Burleigh, and another was the mother of Francis Bacon. The story here alluded to is an absurd legend.

[5] In the chapel of Edward the Confessor. One of the chairs was made for the coronation of Queen Mary. The other is Edward's chair, the seat of which was carried off from Scone in 1296, and was said by tradition to have been Jacob's pillow.

[6] The head of Henry V, cast in silver, was stolen at the time of the Reformation.

upon giving us to know that the head, which was of beaten silver, had been stolen away several years since, " Some Whig, I'll warrant you," says Sir Roger; " you ought to lock up your kings better; they will carry off the body too, if you don't take care."

The glorious names of Henry V and Queen Elizabeth gave the knight great opportunities of shining, and of doing justice to Sir Richard Baker, who, as our knight observed with some surprise, had a great many kings in him, whose monuments he had not seen in the abbey.

For my own part, I could not but be pleased to see the knight show such an honest passion for the glory of his country, and such a respectful gratitude to the memory of its princes.

I must not omit that the benevolence of my good old friend, which flows out towards everyone he converses with, made him very kind to our interpreter, whom he looked upon as an extraordinary man: for which reason he shook him by the hand at parting, telling him that he should be very glad to see him at his lodgings in Norfolk Buildings, and talk over these matters with him more at leisure.

SIR ROGER AT THE PLAY

Respicere exemplar vitæ morumque jubebo
Doctum imitatorem, et veras hinc ducere voces.
—*Horace*, "Ars Poetica," **317.**

Keep Nature's great original in view,
And thence the living images pursue.—*Francis.*

MY friend Sir Roger de Coverley, when we last met together at the club, told me that he had a great mind to see the new tragedy [1] with me, assuring me at the same time that he had not been at a play these twenty years. "The last I saw," said Sir Roger, "was 'The Committee,'[2] which I should not have gone to neither, had not I been told beforehand that it was a good Church of England comedy." He then proceeded to inquire of me who this distressed mother was; and upon hearing that she was Hector's widow, he told me that her husband was a brave man, and that when he was a schoolboy he had read his life at the end of the dictionary. My friend asked me, in the next place, if there would not be some danger in coming home late, in case the Mohocks [3] should be abroad. "I assure you," says he, "I thought I had fallen into their hands last night; for I observed two or three lusty black men that followed me half way up Fleet-street, and mended their pace behind me in proportion as I put on to get away from them. You must know," continued the knight with a smile, "I fancied they had a mind to hunt me; for I remember an honest gentleman in my neighborhood, who was served such a trick in King

[1] "The Distrest Mother," by Ambrose Philips, 1712, founded on Racine's "Andromaque."

[2] A play (1665) by Sir Robert Howard, who collaborated with Dryden in "The Indian Queen."

[3] Who has not trembled at the Mohock's name?
Was there a watchman took his hourly rounds,
Safe from their blows or new invented wounds?—*Gay*, "Trivia," bk. III.

The Mohocks corresponded to the Restoration Scowrers. There was a special scare at the time of this essay.

On March 9, 1712, Swift wrote to Stella that "it is not safe being in the streets at night, for them." So great was the alarm that on March 17th a royal proclamation offered £100 reward for their detection.

Charles II's time, for which reason he has not ventured himself in town ever since. I might have shown them very good sport, had this been their design; for, as I am an old fox-hunter, I should have turned and dodged and have played them a thousand tricks they had never seen in their lives before." Sir Roger added, that "if these gentlemen had any such intention, they did not succeed very well in it; for I threw them out," says he, "at the end of Norfolk-street, where I doubled the corner, and got shelter in my lodgings before they could imagine what was become of me. However," says the knight, "if Captain Sentry will make one with us to-morrow night, and you will both of you call upon me about four o'clock, that we may be at the house before it is full, I will have my own coach in readiness to attend you, for John tells me he has got the fore-wheels mended."

The captain, who did not fail to meet me there at the appointed hour, bid Sir Roger fear nothing, for that he had put on the same sword which he made use of at the battle of Steenkirk.[4] Sir Roger's servants, and among the rest my old friend the butler, had, I found, provided themselves with good oaken plants, to attend their master upon this occasion. When we had placed him in his coach, with myself at his left hand, the captain before him, and his butler at the head of his footmen in the rear, we convoyed him in safety to the playhouse, where, after having marched up the entry in good order, the captain and I went in with him, and seated him betwixt us in the pit. As soon as the house was full, and the candles lighted, my old friend stood up, and looked about him with that pleasure which a mind seasoned with humanity naturally feels in itself, at the sight of a multitude of people who seem pleased with one another, and partake of the same common entertainment. I could not but fancy to myself, as the old man stood up in the middle of the pit, that he made a very proper centre to a tragic audience. Upon the entering of Pyrrhus, the knight told me that he did not believe the King of France himself had a better strut. I was indeed very attentive to my old friend's remarks, because I looked upon them as a piece of natural criticism, and was well pleased to hear

[4] King William was forced to retreat at Steenkirk on July 24, 1692, before the Duke of Luxemburg. The French generals, it is said, were so eager for the fray that they did not take time to adjust their neckcloths. Hence the fashion in Queen Anne's reign of wearing a scarf with studied negligence.

him, at the conclusion of almost every scene, telling me that he could not imagine how the play would end. One while he appeared much concerned for Andromache; and a little while after as much for Hermione; and was extremely puzzled to think what would become of Pyrrhus.

When Sir Roger saw Andromache's obstinate refusal to her lover's importunities, he whispered me in the ear, that he was sure she would never have him; to which he added, with a more than ordinary vehemence, "You can't imagine, sir, what it is to have to do with a widow." Upon Pyrrhus's threatening afterwards to leave her, the knight shook his head, and muttered to himself, "Ay, do if you can." This part dwelt so much upon my friend's imagination, that at the close of the third act, as I was thinking of something else, he whispered me in my ear, "These widows, sir, are the most perverse creatures in the world. But pray," says he, "you that are a critic, is the play according to your dramatic rules, as you call them? Should your people in tragedy always talk to be understood? Why, there is not a single sentence in this play that I do not know the meaning of."

The fourth act very luckily began before I had time to give the old gentleman an answer. "Well," says the knight, sitting down with great satisfaction, "I suppose we are now to see Hector's ghost." He then renewed his attention, and, from time to time, fell a-praising the widow. He made, indeed, a little mistake as to one of her pages, whom at his first entering he took for Astyanax; but quickly set himself right in that particular, though, at the same time, he owned he should have been very glad to have seen the little boy, who, says he, must needs be a very fine child by the account that is given of him. Upon Hermione's going off with a menace to Pyrrhus, the audience gave a loud clap, to which Sir Roger added, "On my word, a notable young baggage!"

As there was a very remarkable silence and stillness in the audience during the whole action, it was natural for them to take the opportunity of these intervals between the acts to express their opinion of the players and of their respective parts. Sir Roger, hearing a cluster of them praise Orestes, struck in with them, and told them that he thought his friend Pylades was a very sensible man. As they were afterwards applauding

Pyrrhus, Sir Roger put in a second time, "And let me tell you," says he, "though he speaks but little, I like the old fellow in whiskers as well as any of them." Captain Sentry, seeing two or three wags who sat near us lean with an attentive ear towards Sir Roger, and fearing lest they should smoke the knight, plucked him by the elbow, and whispered something in his ear, that lasted till the opening of the fifth act. The knight was wonderfully attentive to the account which Orestes gives of Pyrrhus's death, and at the conclusion of it, told me it was such a bloody piece of work that he was glad it was not done upon the stage. Seeing afterwards Orestes in his raving fit, he grew more than ordinarily serious, and took occasion to moralize (in his way) upon an evil conscience, adding, that Orestes, in his madness, looked as if he saw something.

As we were the first that came into the house, so we were the last that went out of it; being resolved to have a clear passage for our old friend, whom we did not care to venture among the jostling of the crowd. Sir Roger went out fully satisfied with his entertainment, and we guarded him to his lodging in the same manner that we brought him to the playhouse; being highly pleased for my own part, not only with the performance of the excellent piece which had been presented, but with the satisfaction which it had given to the good old man.

THE TORY FOX-HUNTER

Studiis rudis, sermone barbarus, impetu strenuus, manu promptus, cogitatione celer.—Vell. Paterc.

FOR the honor of His Majesty, and the safety of his government,[1] we cannot but observe that those who have appeared the greatest enemies to both are of that rank of men who are commonly distinguished by the title of fox-hunters. As several of these have had no part of their education in cities, camps, or courts, it is doubtful whether they are of greater ornament or use to the nation in which they live. It would be an everlasting reproach to politics should such men be able to overturn an establishment which has been formed by the wisest laws, and is supported by the ablest heads. The wrong notions and prejudices which cleave to many of these country gentlemen, who have always lived out of the way of being better informed, are not easy to be conceived by a person who has never conversed with them.

That I may give my readers an image of these rural statesmen, I shall, without further preface, set down an account of a discourse I chanced to have with one of them some time ago. I was travelling towards one of the remote parts of England, when about three o'clock in the afternoon seeing a country gentleman trotting before me with a spaniel by his horse's side, I made up to him. Our conversation opened, as usual, upon the weather, in which we were very unanimous, having both agreed that it was too dry for the season of the year. My fellow-traveller, upon this, observed to me that there had been no good weather since the Revolution. I was a little startled at so extraordinary a remark, but would not interrupt him till he proceeded to tell me of the fine weather they used to have in King

[1] This essay is from "The Freeholder." This paper was written entirely by Addison, and consisted of fifty-five numbers, from December 23, 1715, to June 29, 1716. Its object was purely political, and its main topics were "the enormity of rebellion and the prejudices of ignorance and faction." The "Tory Fox-hunter" is painted manifestly by a Whig brush.

Charles II's reign. I only answered that I did not see how the badness of the weather could be the king's fault; and, without waiting for his reply, asked him whose house it was we saw upon a rising ground at a little distance from us. He told me it belonged to an old fanatical cur, Mr. Such-a-one. "You must have heard of him," says he, "he's one of the Rump." I knew the gentleman's character upon hearing his name, but assured him that to my knowledge he was a good churchman. "Ay," says he, with a kind of surprise, "we were told in the country that he spoke twice, in the Queen's time, against taking off the duties upon French claret." This naturally led us in the proceedings of late parliaments, upon which occasion he affirmed roundly that there had not been one good law passed since King William's accession to the throne, except the act for preserving the game. I had a mind to see him out, and therefore did not care foi contradicting him. "Is it not hard," says he, "that honest gentlemen should be taken into custody of messengers to prevent them from acting according to their consciences? But," says he, "what can we expect when a parcel of factious scoundrels—." He was going on in great passion, but chanced to miss his dog, who was amusing himself about a bush that grew at some distance behind us. We stood still till he had whistled him up, when he fell into a long panegyric upon his spaniel, who seemed, indeed, excellent in his kind; but I found the most remarkable adventure of his life was that he had once like to have worried a dissenting teacher.[2] The master could hardly sit on his horse for laughing all the while he was giving me the particulars of this story, which I found had mightily endeared his dog to him, and as he himself told me, had made him a great favorite among all the honest gentlemen of the country. We were at length diverted from this piece of mirth by a post-boy, who winding his horn at us, my companion gave him two or three curses, and left the way clear for him. "I fancy," said I, "that post brings news from Scotland. I shall long to see the next 'Gazette.'" "Sir," says he, "I make it a rule never to believe any of your printed news. We never see, sir, how things go, except now and then in 'Dyer's Letter,'[3] and I read that more for the style than the news. The man has

[2] Fielding probably profited by Addison's sketch, when twenty-six years later he described in "Joseph Andrews" the squire who set his dogs on Parson Adams.

[3] "Dyer's News-Letter" began about

a clever pen, it must be owned. But is it not strange that we should be making war upon Church of England men, with Dutch and Swiss soldiers, men of anti-monarchical principles? These foreigners will never be loved in England, sir; they have not that wit and good-breeding that we have." I must confess I did not expect to hear my new acquaintance value himself upon these qualifications, but finding him such a critic upon foreigners, I asked him if he had ever travelled. He told me he did not know what travelling was good for, but to teach a man to ride the great horse, to jabber French, and to talk against passive obedience; to which he added that he scarce ever knew a traveller in his life who had not forsook his principles and lost his hunting-seat. "For my part," says he, "I and my father before me have always been for passive obedience, and shall be always for opposing a prince who makes use of ministers that are of another opinion. But where do you intend to inn to-night? (for we were now come in sight of the next town). I can help you to a very good landlord if you will go along with me. He is a lusty jolly fellow, that lives well, at least three yards in the girt, and the best Church of England man upon the road." I had a curiosity to see this High-church innkeeper, as well as to enjoy more of the conversation of my fellow-traveller, and therefore readily consented to set our horses together for that night. As we rode side by side through the town, I was let into the characters of all the principal inhabitants whom we met in our way. One was a dog, another a whelp, another a cur, and another a mongrel, under which several denominations were comprehended all that voted on the Whig side in the last election of burgesses. As for those of his own party, he distinguished them by a nod of his head, and asking them how they did by their Christian names. Upon our arrival at the inn my companion fetched out the jolly landlord, who knew him by his whistle. Many endearments and private whispers passed between them, though it was easy to see, by the landlord's scratching his head, that things did not go to their wishes. The landlord had swelled his body to a prodigious size, and worked up his complexion to a standing crim-

1690. Steele in "Tatler," 18, states that it was specially esteemed by fox-hunters for the marvels in which it dealt. *Cf.* Addison's "Drummer," act ii. sc. 1: "I believe he is still living, because the news of his death was first published in 'Dyer's Letter.'"

son by his zeal for the prosperity of the Church, which he expressed every hour of the day, as his customers dropped in, by repeated bumpers. He had not time to go to church himself, but, as my friend told me in my ear, had headed a mob at the pulling down of two or three meeting-houses. While supper was preparing, he enlarged upon the happiness of the neighboring shire; "for," says he, "there is scarce a Presbyterian in the whole county, except the bishop." In short, I found by his discourse that he had learned a great deal of politics, but not one word of religion, from the parson of his parish; and, indeed, that he had scarce any other notion of religion but that it consisted in hating Presbyterians. I had a remarkable instance of his notions in this particular. Upon seeing a poor decrepit old woman pass under the window where we sat, he desired me to take notice of her; and afterwards informed me that she was generally reputed a witch by the country people, but that, for his part, he was apt to believe she was a Presbyterian.

Supper was no sooner served in that he took occasion, from a shoulder of mutton that lay before us, to cry up the plenty of England, which would be the happiest country in the world, provided we would live within ourselves. Upon which he expatiated on the inconveniences of trade, that carried from us the commodities of our country, and made a parcel of upstarts as rich as men of the most ancient families of England. He then declared frankly that he had always been against all treaties and alliances with foreigners. "Our wooden walls," says he, "are our security, and we may bid defiance to the whole world, especially if they should attack us when the militia is out." I ventured to reply that I had as great an opinion of the English fleet as he had; but I could not see how they could be paid, and manned, and fitted out, unless we encouraged trade and navigation. He replied, with some vehemence, that he would undertake to prove trade would be the ruin of the English nation. I would fain have put him upon it; but he contented himself with affirming it more eagerly, to which he added two or three curses upon the London merchants, not forgetting the directors of the bank. After supper he asked me if I was an admirer of punch, and immediately called for a sneaker. I took this occasion to insinuate the advantages of trade by observing to him that water was the only native of England that could be made use of on

this occasion, but that the lemons, the brandy, the sugar, and the nutmeg were all foreigners. This put him into confusion; but the landlord, who overheard me, brought him off, by affirming, that for constant use, there was no liquor like a cup of English water, provided it had malt enough in it. My squire laughed heartily at the conceit, and made the landlord sit down with us. We sat pretty late over our punch; and, amidst a great deal of improving discourse, drank the healths of several persons in the country, whom I had never heard of, that, they both assured me, were the ablest statesmen in the nation: and of some Londoners, whom they extolled to the skies for their wit, and who, I knew, passed in town for silly fellows. It being now midnight, and my friend perceiving by his almanac that the moon was up, he called for his horses, and took a sudden resolution to go to his house, which was at three miles distance from the town, after having bethought himself that he never slept well out of his own bed. He shook me very heartily by the hand at parting, and discovered a great air of satisfaction in his looks, that he had met with an opportunity of showing his parts, and left me a much wiser man than he found me.

ON DEDICATIONS

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ON EPIC POETRY

—

BY

ALEXANDER POPE

ALEXANDER POPE

1688—1744

Alexander Pope was born in London in 1688. He was the son of a linen-draper who had made some fortune in that trade. In childhood he was noted for the sweetness and gentleness of his temper—qualities which certainly did not distinguish his later years—for the beauty of his voice, and for his manual dexterity in writing. At eight years of age he began the study of Latin and Greek. He was next sent to a Roman Catholic seminary at Twyford, whence he was removed for a lampoon—one of his first efforts in poetry—on his master. In 1700, when twelve years old, he retired with his father, who, like other Romanists of the time, was attached to the fortunes of James II, to Binfield, in Berkshire. Here, at this early age, he determined to become a poet. To indulge this passion, he left no calling or profession, as so many have done. He was invariably and solely a poet from the beginning of his life to its end. His "Ode to Solitude" was written when he was twelve, the "Pastorals" at sixteen, and the "Essay on Criticism" at twenty. With the money received for the first books of his translation of the "Iliad" he purchased the villa at Twickenham, which has ever since been associated with his name. Here and in London he lived until the end of his days, at times the foe, but oftener the associate and companion and friend of the wits and men of letters of the day. He suffered through life from physical infirmity and constant ill-health. He died in 1744.

Pope was confessedly the most eminent poet of his age, and he still remains unequalled in his particular style of poetry. Less vigorous and various than Dryden, on whom he modelled himself, he was a greater artist. His life was uneventful, varied only by the successive publication of his poems, and by literary quarrels into which a vain and jealous temperament was constantly leading him. Like Dryden, he modernized stories from Chaucer, wrote satires, and translated a great ancient poet. But in his satires (the "Dunciad" excepted) he is more didactic than Dryden; and in his "Moral Epistles," and still more in his "Essay on Man," he aims at the character of a philosophical writer. His translation of Homer, though utterly unlike the Greek in its general features, and far from an accurate representation of it in details, will probably keep his name alive as long as any of his original poems, brilliant and highly finished as these undoubtedly are. His prose writings consist chiefly of one or two prefaces, three or four occasional papers, and a large number of letters, which he elaborated with great care, and contrived to have published during his own lifetime. They are marked by great rhetorical adroitness and dexterity; but there is an absence of ease about them, even when the style is most familiar. Gray, however, himself a delightful letter-writer, said of the letters, that though not good letters, they were better things; while Cowper, on the other hand, thought him the most disagreeable maker of epistles he ever met with. The essays "On Dedications" and "On Epic Poetry" were both contributed to "The Guardian."

ON DEDICATIONS

It matters not how false or forc'd
So the best things be said o' th' worst,
It goes for nothing when 'tis said,
Only the arrow 's drawn to th' head,
Whether it be a swan or goose
They level at: so shepherds use
To set the same mark on the hip
Both of their sound and rotten sheep.
—"Hudibras," pt. II. canto i. 627.

THOUGH most things which are wrong in their own nature are at once confessed and absolved in that single word "custom"; yet there are some which, as they have a dangerous tendency, a thinking man will the less excuse on that very account. Among these I cannot but reckon the common practice of dedications, which is of so much the worse consequence, as it is generally used by the people of politeness, and whom a learned education for the most part ought to have inspired with nobler and juster sentiments. This prostitution of praise is not only a deceit upon the gross of mankind, who take their notion of characters from the learned; but also the better sort must by this means lose some part at least of that desire of fame which is the incentive to generous actions, when they find it promiscuously bestowed on the meritorious and undeserving: nay, the author himself, let him be supposed to have ever so true a value for the patron, can find no terms to express it, but what have been already used and rendered suspected by flatterers. Even truth itself in a dedication is like an honest man in a disguise or vizor-mask, and will appear a cheat by being dressed so like one. Though the merit of the person is beyond dispute, I see no reason that because one man is eminent, therefore another has a right to be impertinent, and throw praises in his face. 'Tis just the reverse of the practice of the ancient Romans when a person was advanced to triumph for

his services. As they hired people to rail at him in that circumstance to make him as humble as they could, we have fellows to flatter him, and make him as proud as they can. Supposing the writer not to be mercenary, yet the great man is not more in reason obliged to thank him for his picture in a dedication, than to thank a painter for that on a sign-post; except it be a less injury to touch the most sacred part of him, his character, than to make free with his countenance only. I should think nothing justified me in this point but the patron's permission beforehand, that I should draw him as like as I could; whereas most authors proceed in this affair just as a dauber I have heard of, who, not being able to draw portraits after the life, was used to paint faces at random, and look out afterwards for people whom he might persuade to be like them. To express my notion of the thing in a word: to say more to a man than one thinks, with a prospect of interest, is dishonest; and without it, foolish. And whoever has had success in such an undertaking, must of necessity at once think himself in his heart a knave for having done it, and his patron a fool for having believed it.

I have sometimes been entertained with considering dedications in no very common light. By observing what qualities our writers think it will be most pleasing to others to compliment them with, one may form some judgment which are most so to themselves; and in consequence, what sort of people they are. Without this view one can read very few dedications but will give us cause to wonder how such things came to be said at all, or how they were said to such persons? I have known a hero complimented upon the decent majesty and state he assumed after victory, and a nobleman of a different character applauded for his condescension to inferiors. This would have seemed very strange to me, but that I happened to know the authors. He who made the first compliment was a lofty gentleman, whose air and gait discovered when he had published a new book; and the other tippled every night with the fellows who labored at the press while his own writings were working off. It is observable of the female poets, and ladies dedicatory, that here (as elsewhere) they far exceed us in any strain or rant. As beauty is the thing that sex are piqued upon, they speak of it generally in a more elevated style than is used by the men. They adore in the same manner as they would be adored. So

when the authoress of a famous modern romance begs a young nobleman's permission to pay him her "kneeling adorations," I am far from censuring the expression, as some critics would do, as deficient in grammar or sense; but I reflect, that adorations paid in that posture are what a lady might expect herself, and my wonder immediately ceases. These, when they flatter most, do but as they would be done unto: for, as none are so much concerned at being injured by calumnies as they who are readiest to cast them upon their neighbors, so it is certain none are so guilty of flattery to others as those who most ardently desire it themselves.

What led me into these thoughts was a dedication I happened upon this morning. The reader must understand that I treat the least instances or remains of ingenuity with respect, in what places soever found, or under whatever circumstances of disadvantage. From this love to letters I have been so happy in my searches after knowledge, that I have found unvalued repositories of learning in the lining of bandboxes. I look upon these pasteboard edifices, adorned with the fragments of the ingenious, with the same veneration as antiquaries upon ruined buildings, whose walls preserve divers inscriptions and names, which are nowhere else to be found in the world. This morning, when one of the Lady Lizard's daughters was looking over some hoods and ribands, brought by her tire-woman, with great care and diligence, I employed no less in examining the box which contained them; it was lined with certain scenes of a tragedy, written (as appeared by part of the title there extant) by one of the fair sex. What was most legible was the dedication; which, by reason of the largeness of the characters, was least defaced by those gothic ornaments of flourishes and foliage, wherewith the compilers of these sort of structures do often industriously obscure the works of the learned. As much of it as I could read with any ease, I shall communicate to the reader as follows:

"Though it is a kind of profanation to approach your grace with so poor an offering, yet when I reflect how acceptable a sacrifice of first-fruits was to heaven, in the earliest and purest ages of religion, that they were honored with solemn feasts, and consecrated to altars by a divine command, . . . upon that consideration, as an argument of particular zeal, I dedicate, . . . It is impossible to behold you without adoring; yet,

dazzled and awed by the glory that surrounds you, men feel a sacred power that refines their flames, and renders them pure as those we ought to offer to the Deity. . . . The shrine is worthy the divinity that inhabits it. In your grace we see what woman was before she fell, how nearly allied to the purity and perfection of angels. And We Adore and Bless the Glorious Work."

Undoubtedly these and other periods of this most pious dedication could not but convince the duchess of what the eloquent authoress assures her at the end, that she was her servant with most ardent devotion. I think this a pattern of a new sort of style, not yet taken notice of by the critics, which is above the sublime, and may be called the celestial; that is, when the most sacred phrases appropriated to the honor of the Deity are applied to a mortal of good quality. As I am naturally emulous, I cannot but endeavor, in imitation of this lady, to be the inventor, or, at least, the first producer of a kind of dedication, very different from hers and most others, since it has not a word but what the author religiously thinks in it. It may serve for almost any book, either prose or verse, that has been, is, or shall be published, and might run in this manner:

THE AUTHOR TO HIMSELF.

"Most Honored Sir:

"These labors, upon many considerations, so properly belong to none as to you. First, as it was your most earnest desire alone that could prevail upon me to make them public. Then as I am secure (from that constant indulgence you have ever shown to all which is mine) that no man will so readily take them into protection, or so zealously defend them. Moreover, there is none can so soon discover the beauties; and there are some parts which, it is possible, few besides yourself are capable of understanding. Sir, the honor, affection, and value I have for you are beyond expression; as great, I am sure, or greater, than any man else can bear you. As for any defects which others may pretend to discover in you, I do faithfully declare I was never able to perceive them; and doubt not but those persons are actuated purely by a spirit of malice or envy, the inseparable attendants on shining merit and parts, such as I have always esteemed yours to be. It may perhaps be looked upon

as a kind of violence to modesty, to say this to you in public; but you may believe me it is no more than I have a thousand times thought of you in private. Might I follow the impulse of my soul, there is no subject I could launch into with more pleasure than your panegyric. But, since something is due to modesty, let me conclude by telling you, that there is nothing so much I desire as to know you more thoroughly than I have yet the happiness of doing. I may then hope to be capable to do you some real service; but till then can only assure you, that I shall continue to be, as I am more than any man alive, Dearest Sir, your affectionate friend, and the greatest of your admirers."

ON EPIC POETRY

Docebo
Unde parentur opes; quid alat formetque poetam.
—*Horace,* " Ars Poetica," 306.

I will teach to write,
Tell what the duty of a poet is,
Wherein his wealth and ornament consist,
And how he may be form'd and how improv'd.—*Roscommon.*

IT is no small pleasure to me, who am zealous in the interests of learning, to think I may have the honor of leading the town into a very new and uncommon road of criticism. As that kind of literature is at present carried on, it consists only in a knowledge of mechanic rules which contribute to the structure of different sorts of poetry; as the receipts of good housewives do to the making puddings of flour, oranges, plums, or any other ingredients. It would, methinks, make these my instructions more easily intelligible to ordinary readers, if I discoursed of these matters in the style in which ladies learned in economies dictate to their pupils for the improvement of the kitchen and larder.

I shall begin with epic poetry, because the critics agree it is the greatest work human nature is capable of. I know the French have already laid down many mechanical rules for compositions of this sort, but at the same time they cut off almost all undertakers from the possibility of ever performing them; for the first qualification they unanimously require in a poet, is a genius. I shall here endeavor (for the benefit of my countrymen) to make it manifest, that epic poems may be made " without a genius," nay, without learning or much reading. This must necessarily be of great use to all those poets who confess they never read, and of whom the world is convinced they never learn. What Molière observes of making a dinner, that any man can do it with money, and if a professed cook cannot with-

out, he has his art for nothing; the same may be said of making a poem, it is easily brought by him that has a genius, but the skill lies in doing it without one. In pursuance of this end, I shall present the reader with a plain and certain receipt, by which even sonneteers and ladies may be qualified for this grand performance.

I know it will be objected that one of the chief qualifications of an epic poet is to be knowing in all arts and sciences. But this ought not to discourage those that have no learning, as long as indexes and dictionaries may be had, which are the compendium of all knowledge. Besides, since it is an established rule that none of the terms of those arts and sciences are to be made use of, one may venture to affirm, our poet cannot impertinently offend in this point. The learning which will be more particularly necessary to him, is the ancient geography of towns, mountains, and rivers: for this let him take Cluverius,[1] value fourpence.

Another quality required is a complete skill in languages. To this I answer, that it is notorious persons of no genius have been oftentimes great linguists. To instance in the Greek, of which there are two sorts; the original Greek and that from which our modern authors translate. I should be unwilling to promise impossibilities, but modestly speaking, this may be learned in about an hour's time with ease. I have known one, who became a sudden professor of Greek immediately upon application of the left-hand page of the Cambridge Homer[2] to his eye. It is in these days with authors as with other men, the well-bred are familiarly acquainted with them at first sight; and as it is sufficient for a good general to have surveyed the ground he is to conquer, so it is enough for a good poet to have seen the author he is to be master of. But to proceed to the purpose of this paper.

[1] The allusion is to the "Germania Antiqua" and "Italia Antiqua" (1624) of Cluverius, works which have been called epoch-making in the history of ancient geography.

[2] The editions of the time had an English version on the left-hand pages.

A RECEIPT TO MAKE AN EPIC POEM

For the Fable

Take out of any old poem, history book, romance, or legend (for instance, Geoffrey of Monmouth, or Don Belianis [3] of Greece), those parts of story which afford most scope for long descriptions. Put these pieces together, and throw all the adventures you fancy into one tale. Then take a hero whom you may choose for the sound of his name, and put him into the midst of these adventures. There let him work for twelve books; at the end of which you may take him out ready prepared to conquer, or to marry; it being necessary that the conclusion of an epic poem be fortunate.

To make an Episode.—Take any remaining adventure of your former collection, in which you could no way involve your hero; or any unfortunate accident that was too good to be thrown away; and it will be of use applied to any other person, who may be lost and evaporate in the course of the work, without the least damage to the composition.

For the Moral and Allegory.—These you may extract out of the fable afterwards, at your leisure. Be sure you strain them sufficiently.

For the Manners

For those of the hero, take all the best qualities you can find in all the celebrated heroes of antiquity; if they will not be reduced to a consistency, lay them all on a heap upon him. But be sure they are qualities which your patron would be thought to have; and, to prevent any mistake which the world may be subject to, select from the alphabet those capital letters that compose his name, and set them at the head of a dedication before your poem. However, do not absolutely observe the exact quantity of these virtues, it not being determined whether or no it be necessary for the hero of the poem to be an honest man. For the under characters, gather them from Homer and Vergil, and change the names as occasion serves.

[3] "The Famous and Delectable History of Don Belianis of Greece" was translated into English in 1598. It was one of the most celebrated Spanish romances of chivalry, and was reprieved by the curate in "Don Quixote," when the barber made a bonfire of the Don's library.

For the Machines

Take of deities, male and female, as many as you can use. Separate them into two equal parts, and keep Jupiter in the middle. Let Juno put him in a ferment, and Venus mollify him. Remember on all occasions to make use of volatile Mercury. If you have need of devils, draw them out of Milton's "Paradise," and extract your spirits from Tasso. The use of these machines is evident; and since no epic poem can possibly subsist without them, the wisest way is to reserve them for your greatest necessities. When you cannot extricate your hero by any human means, or yourself by your own wits, seek relief from heaven, and the gods will do your business very readily. This is according to the direct prescription of Horace in his "Art of Poetry":

> "*Nec deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice Nodus*
> *Inciderit.*"
>
> Never to presume to make a god appear,
> But for a business worthy of a god.—*Roscommon.*

That is to say, a poet should never call upon the gods for their assistance but when he is in great perplexity.

For the Descriptions

For a Tempest.—Take Eurus, Zephyr, Auster, and Boreas, and cast them together in one verse. Add to these of rain, lightning, and of thunder (the loudest you can) *quantum sufficit.* Mix your clouds and billows well together until they foam, and thicken your description here and there with a quicksand. Brew your tempest well in your head, before you set a blowing.

For a Battle.—Pick a large quantity of images and descriptions from Homer's "Iliad," with a spice or two of Vergil, and if there remain any overplus you may lay them by for a skirmish. Season it well with *similes,* and it will make an excellent battle.

For Burning a Town.—If such a description be necessary, because it is certain there is one in Vergil, Old Troy is ready burnt to your hands. But if you fear that would be thought

borrowed, a chapter or two of the "Theory of the Conflagration,"[4] well circumstanced, and done into verse, will be a good succedaneum.

As for *Similes and Metaphors,* they may be found all over the creation; the most ignorant may gather them, but the danger is in applying them. For this, advise with your bookseller.

For the Language

(I mean the diction.) Here it will do well to be an imitator of Milton, for you will find it easier to imitate him in this than anything else. Hebraisms and Grecisms are to be found in him, without the trouble of learning the languages. I knew a painter, who (like our poet) had no genius, made his daubings to be thought originals by setting them in the smoke. You may in the same manner give the venerable air of antiquity to your piece, by darkening it up and down with Old English. With this you may be easily furnished upon any occasion by the dictionary commonly printed at the end of Chaucer.

I must not conclude, without cautioning all writers without genius in one material point, which is never to be afraid of having too much fire in their works. I should advise rather to take their warmest thoughts, and spread them abroad upon paper; for they are observed to cool before they are read.

[4] A reference to the "Sacred Theory of the Earth," by Thomas Burnet, D.D., 1689.

ON PASSION

BY

PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE

Earl of Chesterfield

PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE, EARL OF CHESTERFIELD

1694—1773

Philip Dormer Stanhope, one of the most shining characters of his age, was born in 1694. He lost his mother early, and being neglected by his father, was brought up chiefly under the care of his grandmother. He was sent when eighteen years of age to Cambridge, and appears even there to have devoted much attention to the formation of style, of which he afterwards became so great a master. On leaving the university he made the customary tour of Europe. The converse of foreign courts stimulated his taste for the courtesies of polite life and for the attainment of that knowledge of the world which he pursued so steadfastly through later years. The extensive possession of this knowledge became his chief characteristic in after life, and its display is the most notable feature of his writings. He entered Parliament as member for St. Germains before he was of age, but took little part in public affairs till after the death of his father in 1726, when he became a member of the Upper House. His first public employment was an embassy to Holland, in 1728, in which he displayed great skill, diplomacy being peculiarly suited to his tastes and talents from his conciliatory temper and manners, his quick insight into character, and his knowledge of foreign languages and history. A second embassy to the same country confirmed his reputation as a statesman. In 1745, at the moment of the Rebellion in Scotland, Chesterfield became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and entered on the most brilliant and useful part of his career. By impartial justice, by firmness, moderation, and clemency, he kept that country tranquil, and his administration deserves the praise due to a humane, liberal, and far-sighted policy. At the close of 1746 he became Secretary of State, and in 1748 he finally withdrew from official life. In 1751, Chesterfield, with the aid of Lord Macclesfield and of the astronomer Bradley, carried out, in spite of popular prejudice, the reformation of the calendar. After this, and till his death, an increasing deafness excluded Lord Chesterfield from taking part in public life. He died in 1773, "satiated," as he himself said, "with the pompous follies of this life."

Lord Chesterfield left a number of miscellaneous pieces which have been collected from the periodicals in which for the most part they appeared. One of his essays from the "World" is given here. As an author, however, says Lord Mahon, Chesterfield's character must stand or fall by the celebrated "Letters" addressed to his natural son, Philip Stanhope. Viewed as compositions, these letters appear almost unrivalled as models for a serious epistolary style; clear, elegant, and terse, never straining at effect, and yet never hurried into carelessness. They have incurred just reprehension on two grounds—that they insist too much on manners and graces instead of on more solid acquirements, and that some of their maxims are repugnant to good morals; even when right in themselves, the maxims laid down seldom rest on higher motives than expediency, reputation, or personal advantage.

ON PASSION

IT is a vulgar notion, and worthy of the vulgar, for it is both false and absurd, that passionate people are the best natured people in the world. "They are a little hasty, it is true; a trifle will put them in a fury; and while they are in that fury, they neither know nor care what they say or do: but then, as soon as it is over, they are extremely sorry and penitent for any injury or mischief they did." This panegyric on these choleric good-natured people, when examined and simplified, amounts in plain common-sense and English to this: that they are good-natured when they are not ill-natured; and that when in their fits of rage they have said or done things that have brought them to the jail or the gallows, they are extremely sorry for it. It is indeed highly probable that they are; but where is the reparation to those whose reputations, limbs, or lives they have either wounded or destroyed? This concern comes too late, and is only for themselves. Self-love was the cause of the injury, and is the only motive of the repentance.

Had these furious people real good-nature their first offence would be their last, and they would resolve at all events never to relapse. The moment they felt their choler rising, they would enjoin themselves an absolute silence and inaction, and by that sudden check rather expose themselves to a momentary ridicule (which, by the way, would be followed by universal applause), than run the least risk of being irreparably mischievous.

I know it is said in their behalf, that this impulse to wrath is constitutionally so sudden and so strong that they cannot stifle it, even in its birth; but experience shows us, that this allegation is notoriously false; for we daily observe that these stormy persons both can and do lay those gusts of passion, when awed by respect, restrained by interest, or intimidated by fear. The most outrageous *furioso* does not give loose to his anger in presence of his sovereign, or his mistress; nor the expectant

heir in presence of the peevish dotard from whom he hopes for an inheritance. The soliciting courtier, though perhaps under the strongest provocations, from unjust delays and broken promises, calmly swallows his unavailing wrath, disguises it even under smiles, and gently waits for more favorable moments; nor does the criminal fly in a passion at his judge or his jury.

There is then but one solid excuse to be alleged in favor of these people; and if they will frankly urge it, I will candidly admit it, because it points out its own remedy. I mean, let them fairly confess themselves mad, as they most unquestionably are; for what plea can those that are frantic ten times a day bring against shaving, bleeding, and a dark room, when so many much more harmless madmen are confined in their cells at Bedlam for being mad only once in a moon? Nay, I have been assured by the late ingenious Doctor Monro, that such of his patients who were really of a good-natured disposition, and who in their lucid intervals were allowed the liberty of walking about the hospital, would frequently, when they found the previous symptoms of their returning madness, voluntarily apply for confinement, conscious of the mischief which they might possibly do if at liberty. If those who pretend not to be mad, but who really are so, had the same fund of good-nature, they would make the same application to their friends, if they have any.

There is in the Menagiana,[1] a very pretty story of one of these angry gentlemen, which sets their extravagancy in a very ridiculous light.

Two gentlemen were riding together, one of whom, who was a choleric one, happened to be mounted on a high-mettled horse. The horse grew a little troublesome, at which the rider grew very angry, and whipped and spurred him with great fury; to which the horse, almost as wrong-headed as his master, replied with kicking and plunging. The companion, concerned for the danger, and ashamed of the folly of his friend, said to him coolly, "Be quiet, be quiet, and show yourself the wiser of the two."

This sort of madness, for I will call it by no other name, flows

[1] One of the many popular books of "*ana*" produced in France in the seventeenth century, and so named from Menage, poet and grammarian, who died in Paris, 1692.

from various causes, of which I shall now enumerate the most general.

Light unballasted heads are very apt to be overset by every gust, or even breeze of passion; they appreciate things wrong, and think everything of importance, but what really is so; hence those frequent and sudden transitions from silly joy to sillier anger, according as the present silly humor is gratified or thwarted. This is the never-failing characteristic of the uneducated vulgar, who often in the same half-hour fight with fury, and shake hands with affection. Such heads give themselves no time to reason; and if you attempt to reason with them they think you rally them, and resent the affront. They are, in short, overgrown children, and continue so in the most advanced age. Far be it from me to insinuate, what some ill-bred authors have bluntly asserted, that this is in general the case of the fairest part of our species, whose great vivacity does not always allow them time to reason consequentially, but hurries them into testiness upon the least opposition to their will; but at the same time, with all the partiality which I have for them, and nobody can have more than I have, I must confess that, in all their debates, I have much more admired the copiousness of their rhetoric than the conclusiveness of their logic.

People of strong animal spirits, warm constitutions, and a cold genius (a most unfortunate and ridiculous, though common compound) are most irascible animals, and very dangerous in their wrath. They are active, puzzling, blundering, and petulantly enterprising and persevering. They are impatient of the least contradiction, having neither arguments nor words to reply with; and the animal part of their composition bursts out into furious explosions, which have often mischievous consequences. Nothing is too outrageous or criminal for them to say or do in these fits; but as the beginning of their frenzy is easily discoverable by their glaring eyes, inflamed countenances, and rapid motions, the company, as conservators of the peace (which, by the way, every man is, till the authority of a magistrate can be produced), should forcibly seize these madmen, and confine them, in the mean time, in some dark closet, vault, or coal-hole.

Men of nice honor, without one grain of common honesty (for such there are), are wonderfully combustible. The honor-

able is to support and protect the dishonest part of their character. The consciousness of their guilt makes them both sore and jealous.

There is another very irascible sort of human animals, whose madness proceeds from pride. These are generally the people, who, having just fortunes sufficient to live idle and useless to society, create themselves gentlemen, and are scrupulously tender of the rank and dignity which they have not. They require the more respect, from being conscious that they have no right to any. They construe everything into a slight, ask explanations with heat, and misunderstand them with fury. "Who are you? What are you? Do you know who you speak to? I'll teach you to be insolent to a gentleman," are their daily idioms of speech, which frequently end in assault and battery, to the great emolument of the Round-house and Crown office.

I have known many young fellows, who, at their first setting out in the world, or in the army, have simulated a passion which they did not feel, merely as an indication of spirit, which word is falsely looked upon as synonymous with courage. They dress and look fierce, swear enormously, and rage furiously, seduced by that popular word "spirit." But I beg leave to inform these mistaken young gentlemen, whose error I compassionate, that the true spirit of a rational being consists in cool and steady resolution, which can only be the result of reflection and virtue.

I am very sorry to be obliged to own that there is not a more irritable part of the species than my brother authors. Criticism, censure, or even the slightest disapprobation of their immortal works excite their most furious indignation. It is true indeed that they express their resentment in a manner less dangerous, both to others and to themselves. Like incensed porcupines, they dart their quills at the objects of their wrath. The wounds given by these shafts are not mortal, and only painful in proportion to the distance from whence they fly. Those which are discharged (as by much the greatest number are) from great heights, such as garrets or four-pair-of-stairs rooms, are puffed away by the wind, and never hit the mark; but those which are let off from a first or second floor, are apt to occasion a little smarting, and sometimes festering, especially if the party wounded be unsound.

Our great Creator has wisely given us passions to rouse us into action, and to engage our gratitude to him by the pleasures they procure us; but at the same time he has kindly given us reason sufficient, if we will but give that reason fair play, to control those passions; and has delegated authority to say to them, as he said to the waters, "Thus far shall ye go, and no farther." The angry man is his own severest tormentor; his breast knows no peace, while his raging passions are restrained by no sense of either religious or moral duties. What would be his case, if his unforgiving example (if I may use such an expression) were followed by his all-merciful Maker, whose forgiveness he can only hope for, in proportion as he himself forgives and loves his fellow-creatures?

THE COMMONWEALTH OF LETTERS

—

BY

HENRY FIELDING

HENRY FIELDING

1707—1754

Henry Fielding was born in 1707, at Sharpham Park, in Somersetshire. His father, General Edmund Fielding, who belonged to a younger branch of the Denbigh family, had served under Marlborough, and was a person of good position in society, but seems to have set his son the bad example of extravagance. Henry Fielding was educated at Eton, where he is said to have acquired a great familiarity with the Latin and Greek classics. He afterwards studied jurisprudence at Leyden, but was compelled to return to England in consequence of his father's inability to support him at that university. Finding himself at the age of twenty thrown upon his own resources, "with an allowance from his father," as he said himself, which "anyone might pay who could, and with no choice but to be a hackney writer or a hackney coachman," he preferred the former alternative, and became a dramatic author. None of his farces or comedies obtained, or indeed deserved, any considerable success; they can hardly be said to contain any promise of his future excellence. At the age of twenty-eight he married, and, inheriting at the same time a small estate, retired to the country. Here, however, in two years he had completely ruined himself by a ludicrous extravagance, and returned to London to study law. To maintain himself and his family he again wrote plays, and was besides concerned in more than one of the periodicals of the day. At thirty-five the desire of ridiculing Richardson's "Pamela" suggested to him the composition of "Joseph Andrews," and having once found the true bent of his genius, he followed it up with ardor, and, while still occupied with periodical writing and with the duties of a stipendiary magistracy, he found time for the production of his later and equally celebrated novels. But his health, which had long been declining, at last gave way altogether, and in 1754, as a last chance for life, he sailed for Lisbon, but only to die there in the autumn of the same year.

Fielding's English is pure, simple, and unaffected. But his high place in English literature is due not so much to his style, though original and excellent in its kind, as to his transcendent genius as a novelist; to his wide human sympathies, his just conception and sharp delineation of character, his humor, so copious as to extend with undiminished force over his voluminous writings, and the buoyant sense of the enjoyment of life which he has infused into pages composed not unfrequently under the pressure of much physical suffering. His essay on "The Commonwealth of Letters" first appeared in the "Covent Garden Journal." It is characterized by his robust common sense, his vigorous, easy style, and his good-humored, racy wit.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF LETTERS

Οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη, εἷς κοίρανος ἔστω,
Εἷς Βασιλεὺς, ᾧ ἔδωκε Κρόνου παῖς ἀγκυλομήτεω
Σκῆπτρόν τ'ἠδὲ θέμιστας, ἵνα σφίσιν ἐμβασιλεύῃ.—*Homer.*

Here is not allowed
That worst of tyrants, an usurping crowd.
To one sole monarch Jove commits the sway;
His are the laws, and him let all obey.—*Pope.*

THOUGH of the three forms of government acknowledged in the schools all have been very warmly opposed and as warmly defended, yet in this point the different advocates will, I believe, very readily agree, that there is not one of the three which is not greatly to be preferred to total anarchy—a State in which there is no subordination, no lawful power, and no settled government, but where every man is at liberty to act in whatever manner it pleaseth him best.

As this is in reality a most deplorable state, I have long lamented, with great anguish of heart, that it is at present the case of a very large body of people in this kingdom—an assertion which, as it may surprise most of my readers, I will make haste to explain, by declaring that I mean the fraternity of the quill, that body of men to whom the public assign the name of authors.

However absurd politicians may have been pleased to represent the *imperium in imperio*, it will here, I doubt not, be found on a strict examination to be extremely necessary, the commonwealth of literature being indeed totally distinct from the greater commonwealth, and no more dependent upon it than the kingdom of England is on that of France. Of this our legislature seems to have been at all times sensible, as they have never attempted any provision for the regulation or correction of this body. In one instance, it is true, there are (I should rather, I believe, say there were) some laws to restrain them;

for writers, if I am not mistaken, have been formerly punished for blasphemy against God and libels against the government; nay, I have been told that to slander the reputation of private persons was once thought unlawful here as well as among the Romans, who, as Horace tells us, had a severe law for this purpose.

In promulging these laws (whatever may be the reason of suffering them to grow obsolete) the State seems to have acted very wisely, as such kind of writings are really of most mischievous consequence to the public; but, alas! there are many abuses, many horrid evils, daily springing up in the commonwealth of literature, which appear to affect only that commonwealth, at least immediately, of which none of the political legislators have ever taken any notice, nor hath any civil court of judicature ever pretended to any cognizance of them. Nonsense and dulness are no crimes *in foro civili;* no man can be questioned for bad verses in Westminster Hall; and, amongst the many indictments for battery, not one can be produced for breaking poor Priscian's head,[1] though it is done almost every day.

But though immediately, as I have said, these evils do not affect the greater commonwealth, yet, as they tend to the utter ruin of the lesser, so they have a remote evil consequence, even on the State itself; which seems, by having left them unprovided for, to have remitted them, for the sake of convenience, to the government of laws and to the superintendence of magistrates of this lesser commonwealth, and never to have foreseen or suspected that dreadful state of anarchy which at present prevails in this lesser empire—an empire which hath formerly made so great a figure in this kingdom, and that, indeed, almost within our own memories.

It may appear strange that none of our English historians have spoken clearly and distinctly of this lesser empire; but this may be well accounted for when we consider that all these histories have been written by two sorts of persons—that is to say, either politicians or lawyers. Now, the former of these have had their imaginations so entirely filled with the affairs of

[1] "To commit a grammatical error," Priscian being a famous grammarian in the time of Justinian. *Cf.* "Hudibras," pt. II. can. 2, l. 223.

"And hold no sin so deeply red,
As that of breaking Priscian's head."

the greater empire that it is no wonder the business of the lesser should have totally escaped their observation. And as to the lawyers, they are well known to have been very little acquainted with the commonwealth of literature, and to have always acted and written in defiance to its laws.

From these reasons it is very difficult to fix, with certainty, the exact period when this commonwealth first began among us. Indeed, if the originals of all the greater empires upon earth, and even of our own, be wrapped in such obscurity that they elude the inquiries of the most diligent sifters of antiquity, we cannot be surprised that this fate should attend our little empire, opposed as it hath been by the pen of the lawyer, overlooked by the eye of the historian, and never once smelt after by the nose of the antiquary.

In the earliest ages the literary state seems to have been an ecclesiastical democracy, for the clergy are then said to have had all the learning among them; and the great reverence paid at that time to it by the laity appears from hence, that whoever could prove in a court of justice that he belonged to this state, by only reading a single verse in the Testament, was vested with the highest privileges, and might do almost what he pleased, even commit murder with impunity. And this privilege was called the benefit of the clergy.

This commonwealth, however, can scarce be said to have been in any flourishing state of old time even among the clergy themselves; inasmuch as we are told that a rector of a parish, going to law with his parishioners about paving the church, quoted this authority from St. Peter, *Paveant illi, non paveam ego*, which he construed thus: "They are to pave the church, and not I." And this, by a judge who was likewise an ecclesiastic, was allowed to be very good law.

The nobility had clearly no ancient connection with this commonwealth, nor would submit to be bound by any of its laws; witness that provision in an old act of Parliament, "That a nobleman shall be entitled to the benefit of his clergy" (the privilege above mentioned) "even though he cannot read." Nay, the whole body of the laity, though they gave such honors to this commonwealth, appear to have been very few of them under its jurisdiction, as appears by a law cited by Judge Rolls in his "Abridgment," with the reason which he gives for it:

"The command of the sheriff," says this writer, "to his officer, by word of mouth and without writing, is good; for it may be that neither the sheriff nor his officer can write or read."

But not to dwell on these obscure times, when so very little authentic can be found concerning this commonwealth, let us come at once to the days of Henry VIII, when no less a revolution happened in the lesser than in the greater empire, for the literary government became absolute, together with the political, in the hands of one and the same monarch, who was himself a writer, and dictated, not only law, but common-sense too, to all his people, suffering no one to write or speak but according to his will and pleasure.

After this king's demise the literary commonwealth was again separated from the political, for I do not find that his successor on the greater throne succeeded him likewise in the lesser. Nor did either of the two queens, as I can learn, pretend to any authority in this empire, in which the Salic law hath universally prevailed, for though there have been some considerable subjects of the female sex in the literary commonwealth, I never remember to have read of a queen.

It is not easy to say with any great exactness what form of government was preserved in this commonwealth during the reigns of Edward VI, Queen Mary, and Queen Elizabeth, for though there were some great men in those times, none of them seem to have affected the throne of wit; nay, Shakespeare, who flourished in the latter end of the last reign, and who seemed so justly qualified to enjoy this crown, never thought of challenging it.

In the reign of James I the literary government was an aristocracy, for I do not choose to give it the evil name of oligarchy, though it consisted only of four, namely, Master William Shakespeare, Master Benjamin Jonson, Master John Fletcher, and Master Francis Beaumont. This quadrumvirate, as they introduced a new form of government, thought proper, according to Machiavel's advice, to introduce new names; they therefore called themselves "The Wits," a name which hath been affected since by the reigning monarchs in this empire.

The last of this quadrumvirate enjoyed the government alone during his life; after which the troubles that shortly after ensued involved this lesser commonwealth in all the confusion

and ruin of the greater, nor can anything be found of it with sufficient certainty till the "Wits," in the reign of Charles II, after many struggles among themselves for superiority, at last agreed to elect John Dryden to be their king.

This King John had a very long reign, though a very unquiet one; for there were several pretenders to the throne of wit in his time, who formed very considerable parties against him, and gave him great uneasiness, of which his successor hath made mention in the following lines:—

> Pride, folly, malice, against Dryden rose,
> In various shapes of parsons, critics, beaux.[2]

Besides which, his finances were in such disorder, that it is affirmed his treasury was more than once entirely empty.

He died, nevertheless, in a good old age, possessed of the kingdom of Wit, and was succeeded by King Alexander, surnamed Pope.

This prince enjoyed the crown many years, and is thought to have stretched the prerogative much further than his predecessor; he is said to have been extremely jealous of the affections of his subjects, and to have employed various spies, by whom if he was informed of the least suggestion against his title, he never failed of branding the accused person with the word "dunce" on his forehead in broad letters; after which the unhappy culprit was obliged to lay by his pen forever, for no bookseller would venture to print a word that he wrote.

He did indeed put a total restraint on the liberty of the press; for no person durst read anything which was writ without his license and approbation; and this license he granted only to four during his reign, namely, to the celebrated Dr. Swift, to the ingenious Dr. Young, to Dr. Arbuthnot, and to one Mr. Gay, four of his principal courtiers and favorites.

But without diving any deeper into his character, we must allow that King Alexander had great merit as a writer, and his title to the kingdom of Wit was better founded at least than his enemies have pretended.

After the demise of King Alexander, the literary state relapsed again into democracy, or rather, indeed, into downright anarchy; of which, as well as of the consequences, I shall treat in a future paper.

[2] Pope's "Essay on Criticism," l. 458.

THE ADVANTAGES OF LIVING IN A GARRET

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LITERARY COURAGE

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BY

SAMUEL JOHNSON

SAMUEL JOHNSON

1709—1784

Samuel Johnson was born at Lichfield in 1709. His father was a bookseller in that city. He received his early education at the free school under Mr. Hawkins. For about two years before going up to Oxford he was at Stourbridge School. From the university he returned to Lichfield, and became usher at a school. This task proving ungrateful, he turned to his first literary occupation as a translator. On his marriage, in 1736, he again attempted teaching, opening an academy near Lichfield, and in 1737 he and Garrick betook themselves together to London as candidates for the fame which awaited them. Johnson now began the struggle of a literary life, and continued it with ever increasing renown, but with uncertain pecuniary success, until in 1762 he received the grant of £300 a year from the Crown as the reward of his labors in the field of letters. The last twenty years of his life were passed in comparative ease, checkered only by the loss of friends and by the ill-health which beset his latter days. He died in 1784, and was buried with honor in Westminster Abbey, near to the monument of Shakespeare, and close beside the grave of Garrick.

Johnson was the chief literary man of his time; he wrote poems, moral and controversial essays, and biographies. While he composed these, he also prepared his celebrated "English Dictionary," which appeared in 1755. His best known works are two satires, in verse, written in imitation of Juvenal, "London," and the "Vanity of Human Wishes;" moral essays, published in the "Rambler" and the "Idler;" "Rasselas," which was written to defray the expense of his mother's funeral, and to pay her last debts. His edition of "Shakespeare," and his "Lives of the Poets" were his most important publications subsequent to the appearance of the "Dictionary." His satires, his controversial works, his moral essays, and even his dictionary, were among the most popular works of their day, and were considered no less remarkable for beauty of style than for vigor of thought. The verdict of posterity has not altogether ratified the judgment of Johnson's contemporaries. His style, which was the source of his popularity, in the eighteenth century, injures his reputation with modern readers. His settled preference for words derived from Latin sources is opposed to modern taste, and frequently gives to his sentences an air of cumbrous pedantry. Moreover, his thoughts are more remarkable for their vigorous good sense than for their originality or profoundness. It is Johnson's great merit that he never wrote unless he had something to say, and that he could always express exactly what he meant to say in precise language. Few writers who have filled as many volumes have written as little that was not worth writing as Johnson. The essays given here are from the "Rambler" and the "Idler," respectively.

THE ADVANTAGES OF LIVING IN A GARRET

> The gods they challenge, and affect the skies:
> Heaved on Olympus, tottering Ossa stood;
> On Ossa, Pelion nods with all his wood.—*Pope.*

NOTHING has more retarded the advancement of learning than the disposition of vulgar minds to ridicule and vilify what they cannot comprehend. All industry must be excited by hope; and as the student often proposes no other reward to himself than praise, he is easily discouraged by contempt and insult. He who brings with him into a clamorous multitude the timidity of recluse speculation, and has never hardened his front in public life, or accustomed his passions to the vicissitudes and accidents, the triumphs and defeats of mixed conversation, will blush at the stare of petulant incredulity, and suffer himself to be driven by a burst of laughter from the fortresses of demonstration. The mechanist will be afraid to assert before hardy contradiction the possibility of tearing down bulwarks with a silkworm's thread; and the astronomer of relating the rapidity of light, the distance of the fixed stars, and the height of the lunar mountains.

If I could by any efforts have shaken off this cowardice I had not sheltered myself under a borrowed name, nor applied to you for the means of communicating to the public the theory of a garret: a subject which, except some slight and transient strictures, has been hitherto neglected by those who were best qualified to adorn it, either for want of leisure to prosecute the various researches in which a nice discussion must engage them, or because it requires such diversity of knowledge, and such extent of curiosity, as is scarcely to be found in any single intellect; or perhaps others foresaw the tumults which would be raised against them, and confined their knowledge to their own breasts, and abandoned prejudice and folly to the direction of chance.

That the professors of literature generally reside in the high-

est stories has been immemorially observed. The wisdom of the ancients was well acquainted with the intellectual advantages of an elevated situation: why else were the Muses stationed on Olympus, or Parnassus, by those who could with equal right have raised them bowers in the vale of Tempe, or erected their altars among the flexures of Meander? Why was Jove himself nursed upon a mountain? or why did the goddesses, when the prize of beauty was contested, try the cause upon the top of Ida? Such were the fictions by which the great masters of the earlier ages endeavored to inculcate to posterity the importance of a garret, which, though they had been long obscured by the negligence and ignorance of succeeding times, were well enforced by the celebrated symbol of Pythagoras,

"When the wind blows, worship its echo."

This could not but be understood by his disciples as an inviolable injunction to live in a garret, which I have found frequently visited by the echo and the wind. Nor was the tradition wholly obliterated in the age of Augustus, for Tibullus evidently congratulates himself upon his garret, not without some allusion to the Pythagorean precept:

"*Quam juvat immites ventos audire cubantem—*
Aut, gelidas hibernus aquas cum fuderit auster
Securum somnos, imbre juvante, sequi."

"How sweet in sleep to pass the careless hours,
Lull'd by the beating winds and dashing showers."

And it is impossible not to discover the fondness of Lucretius, an earlier writer, for a garret, in his description of the lofty towers of serene learning, and of the pleasure with which a wise man looks down upon the confused and erratic state of the world moving below him:

"*Sed nil dulcius est, bene quam munita tenere*
Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena;
Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palanteis quærere vitæ."

'Tis sweet thy laboring steps to guide
To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supplied,
And all the magazine of learning fortified:
From thence to look below on humankind,
Bewildered in the maze of life, and blind.—*Dryden.*

The institution has, indeed, continued to our own time; the garret is still the usual receptacle of the philosopher and poet; but this, like many ancient customs, is perpetuated only by an accidental imitation, without knowledge of the original reason for which it was established:

"*Causa latet: res est notissima.*"

The cause is secret, but th' effect is known.—*Addison.*

Conjectures have, indeed, been advanced concerning these habitations of literature, but without much satisfaction to the judicious inquirer. Some have imagined that the garret is generally chosen by the wits as most easily rented; and concluded that no man rejoices in his aerial abode, but on the days of payment. Others suspect that a garret is chiefly convenient, as it it remoter than any other part of the house from the outer door, which is often observed to be infested by visitants, who talk incessantly of beer, or linen, or a coat, and repeat the same sounds every morning, and sometimes again in the afternoon, without any variation, except that they grow daily more importunate and clamorous, and raise their voices in time from mournful murmurs to raging vociferations. This eternal monotony is always detestable to a man whose chief pleasure is to enlarge his knowledge and vary his ideas. Others talk of freedom from noise, and abstraction from common business or amusements; and some, yet more visionary, tell us that the faculties are enlarged by open prospects, and that the fancy is more at liberty when the eye ranges without confinement.

These conveniences may perhaps all be found in a well-chosen garret; but surely they cannot be supposed sufficiently important to have operated invariably upon different climates, distant ages, and separate nations. Of a universal practice, there must still be presumed a universal cause, which, however recondite and abstruse, may be perhaps reserved to make me illustrious by its discovery, and you by its promulgation.

It is universally known that the faculties of the mind are invigorated or weakened by the state of the body, and that the body is in a great measure regulated by the various compressions of the ambient element. The effects of the air in the production or cure of corporeal maladies have been acknowledged from the time of Hippocrates; but no man has yet sufficiently

considered how far it may influence the operations of the genius, though every day affords instances of local understanding, of wits and reasoners, whose faculties are adapted to some single spot, and who, when they are removed to any other place, sink at once into silence and stupidity. I have discovered, by a long series of observations, that invention and elocution suffer great impediments from dense and impure vapors, and that the tenuity of a defecated air, at a proper distance from the surface of the earth, accelerates the fancy, and sets at liberty those intellectual powers which were before shackled by too strong attraction, and unable to expand themselves under the pressure of a gross atmosphere. I have found dulness to quicken into sentiment in a thin ether, as water, though not very hot, boils in a receiver partly exhausted; and heads, in appearance empty, have teemed with notions upon rising ground, as the flaccid sides of a football would have swelled out into stiffness and extension.

For this reason I never think myself qualified to judge decisively of any man's faculties whom I have only known in one degree of elevation; but take some opportunity of attending him from the cellar to the garret, and try upon him all the various degrees of rarefaction and condensation, tension and laxity. If he is neither vivacious aloft, nor serious below, I then consider him as hopeless; but as it seldom happens that I do not find the temper to which the texture of his brain is fitted, I accommodate him in time with a tube of mercury, first marking the point most favorable to his intellects, according to rules which I have long studied, and which I may, perhaps, reveal to mankind in a complete treatise of barometrical pneumatology.

Another cause of the gayety and sprightliness of the dwellers in garrets is probably the increase of that vertiginous motion, with which we are carried round by the diurnal revolution of the earth. The power of agitation upon the spirits is well known; every man has felt his heart lightened in a rapid vehicle, or on a galloping horse; and nothing is plainer, than that he who towers to the fifth story, is whirled through more space by every circumrotation than another that grovels upon the ground-floor. The nations between the tropics are known to be fiery, inconstant, inventive, and fanciful; because, living at the utmost length of the earth's diameter, they are carried about

with more swiftness than those whom nature has placed nearer to the poles; and, therefore, as it becomes a wise man to struggle with the inconveniences of his country, we must actuate our languor by taking a few turns round the centre in a garret.

If you imagine that I ascribe to air and motion effects which they cannot produce, I desire you to consult your own memory, and consider whether you have never known a man acquire a reputation in his garret, which, when fortune or a patron had placed him upon the first floor, he was unable to maintain; and who never recovered his former vigor of understanding till he was restored to his original situation. That a garret will make every man a wit I am very far from supposing; I know there are some who would continue blockheads even on the summit of the Andes or on the peak of Teneriffe. But let not any man be considered as unimprovable till this potent remedy has been tried; for perhaps he was formed to be great only in a garret, as the joiner of Aretæus was rational in no other place but in his own shop.

I think a frequent removal to various distances from the centre so necessary to a just estimate of intellectual abilities, and consequently of so great use in education, that if I hoped that the public could be persuaded to so expensive an experiment, I would propose, that there should be a cavern dug, and a tower erected, like those which Bacon describes in Solomon's house, for the expansion and concentration of understanding, according to the exigence of different employments, or constitutions. Perhaps some that fume away in meditations upon time and space in the tower might compose tables of interest at a certain depth; and he that upon level ground stagnates in silence, or creeps in narrative, might, at the height of half a mile, ferment into merriment, sparkle with repartee, and froth with declamation.

Addison observes that we may find the heat of Vergil's climate in some lines of his Georgic; so when I read a composition I immediately determine the height of the author's habitation. As an elaborate performance is commonly said to smell of the lamp, my commendation of a noble thought, a sprightly sally, or a bold figure, is to pronounce it fresh from the garret; an expression which would break from me upon the perusal of most of your papers, did I not believe that you sometimes quit the garret, and ascend into the cock-loft.

LITERARY COURAGE

Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt.—Horace.

Whilst fools one vice condemn,
They run into the opposite extreme.—*Creech.*

THAT wonder is the effect of ignorance has been often observed. The awful stillness of attention with which the mind is overspread at the first view of an unexpected effect ceases when we have leisure to disentangle complications and investigate causes. Wonder is a pause of reason, a sudden cessation of the mental progress, which lasts only while the understanding is fixed upon some single idea, and is at an end when it recovers force enough to divide the object into its parts or mark the intermediate gradations from the first agent to the last consequence.

It may be remarked with equal truth that ignorance is often the effect of wonder. It is common for those who have never accustomed themselves to the labor of inquiry, nor invigorated their confidence by conquests over difficulty, to sleep in the gloomy quiescence of astonishment without any effect to animate inquiry or dispel obscurity. What they cannot immediately conceive they consider as too high to be reached, or too extensive to be comprehended; they therefore content themselves with the gaze of folly, forbear to attempt what they have no hope of performing, and resign the pleasure of rational contemplation to more pertinacious study or more active faculties.

Among the productions of mechanic art, many are of a form so different from that of their first materials, and many consist of parts so numerous and so nicely adapted to each other that it is not possible to view them without amazement. But when we enter the shops of artificers, observe the various tools by which every operation is facilitated, and trace the progress of a manufacture through the different hands that, in succession to each other, contribute to its perfection, we soon discover that

every single man has an easy task, and that the extremes, however remote, of natural rudeness and artificial elegance are joined by a regular concatenation of effects, of which every one is introduced by that which precedes it, and equally introduces that which is to follow.

The same is the state of intellectual and manual performances. Long calculations or complex diagrams affright the timorous and unexperienced from a second view; but if we have skill sufficient to analyze them into simple principles, it will be discovered that our fear was groundless. "Divide and conquer" is a principle equally just in science as in policy. Complication is a species of confederacy which, while it continues united, bids defiance to the most active and vigorous intellect, but of which every member is separately weak, and which may therefore be quickly subdued, if it can once be broken.

The chief art of learning, as Locke has observed, is to attempt but little at a time. The widest excursions of the mind are made by short flights frequently repeated; the most lofty fabrics of science are formed by the continued accumulation of single propositions.

It often happens, whatever be the cause, that impatience of labor, or dread of miscarriage, seizes those who are most distinguished for quickness of apprehension; and that they who might with greatest reason promise themselves victory are least willing to hazard the encounter. This diffidence, where the attention is not laid asleep by laziness, or dissipated by pleasures, can arise only from confused and general views, such as negligence snatches in haste, or from the disappointment of the first hopes formed by arrogance without reflection. To expect that the intricacies of science will be pierced by a careless glance, or the eminences of fame ascended without labor, is to expect a peculiar privilege, a power denied to the rest of mankind; but to suppose that the maze is inscrutable to diligence or the heights inaccessible to perseverance, is to submit tamely to the tyranny of fancy, and enchain the mind in voluntary shackles.

It is the proper ambition of the heroes of literature to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge by discovering and conquering new regions of the intellectual world. To the success of such undertakings, perhaps, some degree of fortuitous happiness is necessary, which no man can promise or procure to himself;

and therefore doubt and irresolution may be forgiven in him that ventures into the unexplored abysses of truth, and attempts to find his way through the fluctuations of uncertainty, and the conflicts of contradiction. But when nothing more is required than to pursue a path already beaten, and to trample obstacles which others have demolished, why should any man so much distrust his own intellect as to imagine himself unequal to the attempt?

It were to be wished that they who devote their lives to study would at once believe nothing too great for their attainment, and consider nothing as too little for their regard; that they would extend their notice alike to science and to life, and unite some knowledge of the present world to their acquaintance with past ages and remote events.

Nothing has so much exposed men of learning to contempt and ridicule as their ignorance of things which are known to all but themselves. Those who have been taught to consider the institutions of the schools as giving the last perfection to human abilities are surprised to see men wrinkled with study, yet wanting to be instructed in the minute circumstances of propriety, or the necessary forms of daily transaction; and quickly shake off their reverence for modes of education, which they find to produce no ability above the rest of mankind.

"Books," says Bacon, "can never teach the use of books." The student must learn by commerce with mankind to reduce his speculations to practice, and accommodate his knowledge to the purposes of life.

It is too common for those who have been bred to scholastic professions, and passed much of their time in academies where nothing but learning confers honors, to disregard every other qualification, and to imagine that they shall find mankind ready to pay homage to their knowledge, and to crowd about them for instruction. They therefore step out from their cells into the open world with all the confidence of authority and dignity of importance; they look round about them at once with ignorance and scorn on a race of beings to whom they are equally unknown and equally contemptible, but whose manners they must imitate, and with whose opinions they must comply, if they desire to pass their time happily among them.

To lessen that disdain with which scholars are inclined to look

on the common business of the world, and the unwillingness with which they condescend to learn what is not to be found in any system of philosophy, it may be necessary to consider that, though admiration is excited by abstruse researches and remote discoveries, yet pleasure is not given, nor affection conciliated, but by softer accomplishments, and qualities more easily communicable to those about us. He that can only converse upon questions about which only a small part of mankind has knowledge sufficient to make them curious, must lose his days in unsocial silence, and live in the crowd of life without a companion. He that can only be useful on great occasions may die without exerting his abilities, and stand a helpless spectator of a thousand vexations which fret away happiness, and which nothing is required to remove but a little dexterity of conduct and readiness of expedients.

No degree of knowledge attainable by man is able to set him above the want of hourly assistance, or to extinguish the desire of fond endearments and tender officiousness; and therefore no one should think it unnecessary to learn those arts by which friendship may be gained. Kindness is preserved by a constant reciprocation of benefits or interchange of pleasures; but such benefits only can be bestowed as others are capable to receive, and such pleasures only imparted as others are qualified to enjoy.

By this descent from the pinnacles of art no honor will be lost; for the condescensions of learning are always overpaid by gratitude. An elevated genius employed in little things appears, to use the simile of Longinus, like the sun in his evening declination; he remits his splendor but retains his magnitude, and pleases more though he dazzles less.

OF THE DELICACY OF TASTE AND PASSION

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OF SIMPLICITY AND REFINEMENT IN WRITING

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BY

DAVID HUME

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1711—1776

David Hume was born at Edinburgh in 1711, and died there in 1776. His father was a small Scottish laird of the great border clan of Home or Hume. His mother was a daughter of Sir David Falconer, President of the College of Justice. She was a woman of singular merit; and being left a widow with several young children, devoted herself to their education. David, the second son, was left with a very slender inheritance, and it was resolved that he should try his fortunes at the law. But this study was distasteful to him, and for a few months he entered the house of a merchant at Bristol. Business, however, he disliked even more than law, and at twenty-three he resolved to devote his life to philosophy and literature. For the next three years he lived with great frugality in a French country town, where he wrote his "Treatise on Human Nature," and then came to London to publish it. At his brother's house in Scotland he heard that it had fallen "dead-born from the press." He continued to reside with his brother for some years, and in 1742 published the first part of his "Essays," which were received somewhat more favorably. His studious habits were a few years later interrupted by an engagement to serve as secretary to General Sinclair, during that officer's military embassy to Vienna and Turin. Returning to his brother's hospitable house, he published in 1751 the second part of his "Essays," and recast the first part. This first part related to the principles of morals, and he considered it his best work; but it failed to achieve so high a place in popular esteem as the political discourses which formed the second part.

He now made Edinburgh his headquarters, and being appointed librarian to the Faculty of Advocates, obtained what he chiefly valued, a great command of books. This led him to historical studies; and in 1754 he published his "History of Charles I." But his first trial in this department met with no encouragement; in twelve months only forty-five copies were sold. Notwithstanding, in two years' time he put out a continuation of the "History of the Stuarts, from the Death of Charles I to the Revolution of 1688;" and this volume had much greater success. In the following year he completed his "History of England;" the "House of Tudor" furnishing the subject of his next volumes, and the "Early Annals" being published last in order. His name had now become famous; and in 1763, when he visited Paris as attached to Lord Hertford's embassy, he was received by the literary society of that city with extraordinary enthusiasm. Returning to England in 1766, he was appointed Under-Secretary of State by General Conway, brother of Lord Hertford, and served for two or three years in the Home Office. In 1769 he retired for the last time to Edinburgh, in the possession of a handsome income. But in 1775 he was attacked by a lingering disorder, which he bore with unfailing patience and cheerfulness till he died in his sixty-fifth year. The style in which he wrote reflects his character with great exactness: it is simple and luminous; not calculated to raise high admiration or greatly excite the feelings, but seldom failing to win the reader by its singular grace and unaffected ease. No writer except Addison has equalled Hume as an essayist in purity of diction, and the three essays given here are models of their kind, abounding in critical acumen and intellectual sparkle.

OF THE DELICACY OF TASTE AND PASSION

SOME people are subject to a certain delicacy of passion which makes them extremely sensible to all the accidents of life, and gives them a lively joy upon every prosperous event, as well as a piercing grief when they meet with misfortunes and adversity. Favors and good offices easily engage their friendship; while the smallest injury provokes their resentment. Any honor or mark of distinction elevates them above measure; but they are as sensibly touched with contempt. People of this character have, no doubt, more lively enjoyments, as well as more pungent sorrows, than men of cool and sedate tempers: but, I believe, when everything is balanced, there is no one who would not rather be of the latter character, were he entirely master of his own disposition. Good or ill fortune is very little at our disposal: and when a person that has this sensibility of temper meets with any misfortune, his sorrow or resentment takes entire possession of him, and deprives him of all relish in the common occurrences of life; the right enjoyment of which forms the chief part of our happiness. Great pleasures are much less frequent than great pains; so that a sensible temper must meet with fewer trials in the former way than in the latter. Not to mention that men of such lively passions are apt to be transported beyond all bounds of prudence and discretion, and to take false steps in the conduct of life which are often irretrievable.

There is a delicacy of taste observable in some men, which very much resembles this delicacy of passion, and produces the same sensibility to beauty and deformity of every kind, as that does to prosperity and adversity, obligations and injuries. When you present a poem or a picture to a man possessed of this talent, the delicacy of his feelings makes him be sensibly touched with every part of it; nor are the masterly strokes perceived with more exquisite relish and satisfaction than the

negligences or absurdities with disgust and uneasiness. A polite and judicious conversation affords him the highest entertainment; rudeness or impertinence is as great a punishment to him. In short, delicacy of taste has the same effect as delicacy of passion: it enlarges the sphere both of our happiness and misery, and makes us sensible to the pains as well as to the pleasures which escape the rest of mankind.

I believe, however, everyone will agree with me that, notwithstanding this resemblance, delicacy of taste is as much to be desired and cultivated as delicacy of passion is to be lamented, and to be remedied, if possible. The good or ill accidents of life are very little at our disposal, but we are pretty much masters what books we shall read, what diversions we shall partake of, and what company we shall keep. Philosophers have endeavored to render happiness entirely independent of everything external. The degree of perfection is impossible to be attained; but every wise man will endeavor to place his happiness on such objects chiefly as depend upon himself: and that is not to be attained so much by any other means as by this delicacy of sentiment. When a man is possessed of that talent, he is more happy by what pleases his taste than by what gratifies his appetites; and receives more enjoyment from a poem or a piece of reasoning than the most expensive luxury can afford.

Whatever connection there may be originally between these two species of delicacy, I am persuaded that nothing is so proper to cure us of this delicacy of passion as the cultivating of that higher and more refined taste, which enables us to judge of the characters of men, of compositions of genius, and of the productions of the nobler arts. A greater or less relish for those obvious beauties, which strike the senses, depends entirely upon the greater or less sensibility of the temper: but with regard to the sciences and liberal arts, a fine taste is, in some measure, the same with strong sense, or at least depends so much upon it that they are inseparable. In order to judge aright of a composition of genius, there are so many views to be taken in, so many circumstances to be compared, and such a knowledge of human nature requisite, that no man, who is not possessed of the soundest judgment, will ever make a tolerable critic in such performances. And this is a new reason for

cultivating a relish in the liberal arts. Our judgment will strengthen by this exercise: we shall form juster notions of life. Many things which please or afflict others will appear to us too frivolous to engage our attention: and we shall lose by degrees that sensibility and delicacy of passion which are so incommodious.

But perhaps I have gone too far in saying that a cultivated taste for the polite arts extinguishes the passions, and renders us indifferent to those objects which are so fondly pursued by the rest of mankind. On further reflection, I find that it rather improves our sensibility for all the tender and agreeable passions; at the same time that it renders the mind incapable of the rougher and more boisterous emotions.

"Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes,
Emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros."

For this, I think, there may be assigned two very natural reasons:

I. Nothing is so improving to the temper as the study of the beauties, either of poetry, eloquence, music, or painting. They give a certain elegance of sentiment to which the rest of mankind are strangers. The emotions which they excite are soft and tender. They draw off the mind from the hurry of business and interest; cherish reflection; dispose to tranquillity; and produce an agreeable melancholy, which, of all dispositions of the mind, is best suited to love and friendship.

II. A delicacy of taste is favorable to love and friendship, by confining our choice to few people, and making us indifferent to the company and conversation of the greater part of men. You will seldom find that mere men of the world, whatever strong sense they may be endowed with, are very nice in distinguishing characters, or in marking those insensible differences and gradations, which make one man preferable to another. Anyone that has competent sense is sufficient for their entertainment: they talk to him of their pleasures and affairs, with the same frankness that they would to another; and finding many who are fit to supply his place, they never feel any vacancy or want in his absence. But to make use of the allusion of a celebrated French author,[1] the judgment may be com-

[1] Fontenelle, "*Pluralité des Mondes*," Sixième Soir.

pared to a clock or watch, where the most ordinary machinery is sufficient to tell the hours; but the most elaborate alone can point out the minutes and seconds, and distinguish the smallest differences of time. One that has well digested his knowledge both of books and men has little enjoyment but in the company of a few select companions. He feels too sensibly how much all the rest of mankind fall short of the notions which he has entertained. And, his affections being thus confined within a narrow circle, no wonder he carries them further than if they were more general and undistinguished. The gayety and frolic of a bottle companion improves with him into a solid friendship: and the ardors of a youthful appetite become an elegant passion.

OF SIMPLICITY AND REFINEMENT IN WRITING

FINE writing, according to Addison, consists of sentiments which are natural, without being obvious. There cannot be a juster and more concise definition of fine writing.

Sentiments which are merely natural affect not the mind with any pleasure, and seem not worthy of our attention. The pleasantries of a waterman, the observations of a peasant, the ribaldry of a porter or hackney coachman, all of these are natural and disagreeable. What an insipid comedy should we make of the chit-chat of the tea-table, copied faithfully and at full length? Nothing can please persons of taste, but nature drawn with all her graces and ornaments, *la belle nature;* or if we copy low life, the strokes must be strong and remarkable, and must convey a lively image to the mind. The absurd naïveté of Sancho Panza is represented in such inimitable colors by Cervantes that it entertains as much as the picture of the most magnanimous hero or the softest lover.

The case is the same with orators, philosophers, critics, or any author who speaks in his own person, without introducing other speakers or actors. If his language be not elegant, his observations uncommon, his sense strong and masculine, he will in vain boast his nature and simplicity. He may be correct; but he never will be agreeable. It is the unhappiness of such authors that they are never blamed or censured. The good fortune of a book, and that of a man, are not the same. The secret deceiving path of life, which Horace talks of, "*fallentis semita vitæ,*" may be the happiest lot of the one; but it is the greatest misfortune which the other can possibly fall into.

On the other hand, productions which are merely surprising, without being natural, can never give any lasting entertainment

to the mind. To draw chimeras is not, properly speaking, to copy or imitate. The justness of representation is lost, and the mind is displeased to find a picture which bears no resemblance to any original. Nor are such excessive refinements more agreeable in the epistolary or philosophic style than in the epic or tragic. Too much ornament is a fault in every kind of production. Uncommon expressions, strong flashes of wit, pointed similes, and epigrammatic turns, especially when they recur too frequently, are a disfigurement rather than any embellishment of discourse. As the eye, in surveying a Gothic building, is distracted by the multiplicity of ornaments, and loses the whole by a minute attention to the parts; so the mind, in perusing a work overstocked with wit, is fatigued and disgusted with the constant endeavor to shine and surprise. This is the case where a writer overabounds in wit, even though that wit in itself should be just and agreeable. But it commonly happens to such writers that they seek for their favorite ornaments, even where the subject does not afford them; and by that means have twenty insipid conceits for one thought which is really beautiful.

There is no object in critical learning more copious than this of the just mixture of simplicity and refinement in writing; and therefore, not to wander in too large a field, I shall confine myself to a few general observations on that head.

I. I observe that though excesses of both kinds are to be avoided, and though a proper medium ought to be studied in all productions, yet this medium lies not in a point, but admits of a considerable latitude. Consider the wide distance, in this respect, between Pope and Lucretius. These seem to lie in the two greatest extremes of refinement and simplicity in which a poet can indulge himself, without being guilty of any blamable excess. All this interval may be filled with poets, who may differ from each other, but may be equally admirable, each in his peculiar style and manner. Corneille and Congreve, who carry their wit and refinement somewhat further than Pope (if poets of so different a kind can be compared together), and Sophocles and Terence, who are more simple than Lucretius, seem to have gone out of that medium, in which the most perfect productions are found, and to be guilty of some excess in these opposite characters. Of all the great poets, Vergil and

Racine, in my opinion, lie nearest the centre, and are the furthest removed from both the extremities.

II. My observation on this head is that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to explain by words where the just medium lies between the excesses of simplicity and refinement, or to give any rule by which we can know precisely the bounds between the fault and the beauty. A critic may not only discourse very judiciously on this head without instructing his readers, but even without understanding the matter perfectly himself. There is not a finer piece of criticism than the "Dissertation on Pastorals," by Fontenelle; in which, by a number of reflections and philosophical reasonings, he endeavors to fix the just medium which is suitable to that species of writing. But let anyone read the pastorals of that author, and he will be convinced that this judicious critic, notwithstanding his fine reasonings, had a false taste, and fixed the point of perfection much nearer the extreme of refinement than pastoral poetry will admit of. The sentiments of his shepherds are better suited to the toilettes of Paris than to the forests of Arcadia. But this it is impossible to discover from his critical reasonings. He blames all excessive painting and ornament as much as Vergil could have done, had that great poet written a dissertation on this species of poetry. However different the tastes of men their general discourse on these subjects is commonly the same. No criticism can be instructive which descends not to particulars, and is not full of examples and illustrations. It is allowed on all hands that beauty, as well as virtue, always lies in a medium; but where this medium is placed is a great question, and can never be sufficiently explained by general reasonings.

III. I shall deliver on this subject: That we ought to be more on our guard against the excess of refinement than that of simplicity; and that because the former excess is both less beautiful and more dangerous than the latter.

It is a certain rule that wit and passion are entirely incompatible. When the affections are moved there is no place for the imagination. The mind of man being naturally limited, it is impossible that all its faculties can operate at once: and the more any one predominates, the less room is there for the others to exert their vigor. For this reason, a greater simplicity is

required in all compositions, where men and actions and passions are painted, than in such as consist of reflections and observations. And, as the former species of writing is the more engaging and beautiful, one may safely, upon this account, give the preference to the extreme of simplicity above that of refinement.

We may also observe that those compositions which we read the oftenest, and which every man of taste has got by heart, have the recommendation of simplicity, and have nothing surprising in the thought, when divested of that elegance of expression, and harmony of numbers, with which it is clothed. If the merit of the composition lie in a point of wit, it may strike at first; but the mind anticipates the thought in the second perusal, and is no longer affected by it. When I read an epigram of Martial, the first line recalls the whole; and I have no pleasure in repeating to myself what I know already. But each line, each word in Catullus, has its merit; and I am never tired with the perusal of him. It is sufficient to run over Cowley once; but Parnel, after the fiftieth reading, is as fresh as at the first. Besides, it is with books as with women, where a certain plainness of manner and of dress is more engaging, than that glare of paint, and airs, and apparel, which may dazzle the eye, but reaches not the affections. Terence is a modest and bashful beauty, to whom we grant everything, because he assumes nothing, and whose purity and nature make a durable though not a violent impression on us.

But refinement, as it is the less beautiful, so is it the more dangerous extreme, and what we are the aptest to fall into. Simplicity passes for dulness, when it is not accompanied with great elegance and propriety. On the contrary, there is something surprising in a blaze of wit and conceit. Ordinary readers are mightily struck with it, and falsely imagine it to be the most difficult, as well as most excellent way of writing. Seneca abounds with agreeable faults, says Quintilian, "*abundat dulcibus vitiis*"; and for that reason is the more dangerous, and the more apt to pervert the taste of the young and the inconsiderate.

I shall add that the excess of refinement is now more to be guarded against than ever; because it is the extreme which men are the most apt to fall into, after learning has made some

progress, and after eminent writers have appeared in every species of composition. The endeavor to please by novelty leads men wide of simplicity and nature, and fills their writings with affectation and conceit. It was thus the Asiatic eloquence degenerated so much from the Attic. It was thus the age of Claudius and Nero became so much inferior to that of Augustus in taste and genius. And perhaps there are at present some symptoms of a like degeneracy of taste in France as well as in England.

A HUMORIST

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ON RESERVE

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AN OPINION OF GHOSTS

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ON WRITING AND BOOKS

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BY

WILLIAM SHENSTONE

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1714—1763

William Shenstone was born at Leasowes, in the parish of Hales Owen, Shropshire, in November, 1714. He was taught to read at what is termed a dame-school, and his venerable preceptress has been immortalized by his poem of the "Schoolmistress." In the year 1732 he was sent to Pembroke College, Oxford, where he remained four years. In 1745 the paternal estate fell to his own care and management, and he began from this time, as Johnson characteristically describes it, "to point his prospects, to diversify his surface, to entangle his walks, and to wind his waters; which he did with such judgment and fancy as made his little domain the envy of the great and the admiration of the skilful; a place to be visited by travellers and copied by designers." Descriptions of the Leasowes have been written by Dodsley and Goldsmith. The property was altogether not worth more than £300 per annum, and Shenstone had devoted so much of his means to external embellishment that he was compelled to live in a dilapidated house, not fit, as he acknowledges, to receive "polite friends." An unfortunate attachment to a young lady, and disappointed ambition—for he aimed at political as well as poetical celebrity—conspired, with his passion for gardening and improvement, to fix him in his solitary situation. He became querulous and dejected, and pined at the unequal gifts of fortune. Yet Shenstone was essentially kind and benevolent, and he must at times have experienced exquisite pleasure in his romantic retreat, to which every year would give fresh beauty, and develop more distinctly the creations of his taste and labor. This advantage he possessed with the additional charm of a love of literature; but Shenstone sighed for more than inward peace and satisfaction. He built his happiness on the applause of others, and died in solitude a votary of the world. His death took place at the Leasowes, February 11, 1763.

The works of Shenstone were collected and published after his death by his friend Dodsley, in three volumes. The first contains his poems, the second his prose essays, and the third his letters and other pieces. Gray remarks of his correspondence, that it is "about nothing else but the Leasowes, and his writings with two or three neighboring clergymen who wrote verses too." The essays are good, displaying an ease and grace of style united to judgment and discrimination. They have not the mellow ripeness of thought and learning of Cowley's essays, but they resemble them more closely than any others we possess. In poetry, Shenstone tried different styles: his elegies barely reach mediocrity; his levities, or pieces of humor, are dull and spiritless. His highest effort is the "Schoolmistress," published in 1742, but said to be "written at college, 1736." It was altered and enlarged after its first publication. This poem is a descriptive sketch in imitation of Spenser, so delightfully quaint and ludicrous, yet true to nature, that it has all the force and vividness of a painting by Teniers or Wilkie. His "Pastoral Ballad," in four parts, is also the finest English poem of that order. The four essays given here are among the best of his prose writings.

A HUMORIST

TO form an estimate of the proportion which one man's happiness bears to another's, we are to consider the mind that is allotted him with as much attention as the circumstances. It were superfluous to evince that the same objects which one despises are frequently to another the substantial source of admiration. The man of business and the man of pleasure are to each other mutually contemptible; and a blue garter has less charms for some than they can discover in a butterfly. The more candid and sage observer condemns neither for his pursuits; but for the derision he so profusely lavishes upon the disposition of his neighbor. He concludes that schemes infinitely various were at first intended for our pursuit and pleasures, and that some find their account in heading a cry of hounds, as much as others in the dignity of Lord Chief Justice.

Having premised thus much, I proceed to give some account of a character which came within the sphere of my own observation.

Not the entrance of a cathedral, not the sound of a passing bell, not the furs of a magistrate, nor the sables of a funeral, were fraught with half the solemnity of face!

Nay, so wonderfully serious was he observed to be on all occasions, that it was found hardly possible to be otherwise in his company. He quashed the loudest tempest of laughter, whenever he entered the room; and men's features, though ever so much roughened, were sure to grow smooth at his approach.

The man had nothing vicious, or even ill-natured in his character; yet he was the dread of all jovial conversation; the young, the gay, found their spirits fly before him. Even the kitten and the puppy, as it were by instinct, would forego their frolics, and be still. The depression he occasioned was like

that of a damp or vitiated air. Unconscious of any apparent cause, you found your spirits sink insensibly: and were anyone to sit for the picture of ill-luck, it is not possible the painter could select a more proper person.

Yet he did not fail to boast of a superior share of reason, even for the want of that very faculty, risibility, with which it is supposed to be always joined.

Indeed he acquired the character of the most ingenious person of his county, from this meditative temper. Not that he had ever made any great discovery of his talents; but a few oracular declarations, joined with a common opinion that he was writing somewhat for posterity, completed his reputation.

Numbers would have willingly depreciated his character had not his known sobriety and reputed sense deterred them.

He was one day overheard at his devotions, returning his most fervent thanks for some particularities in his situation, which the generality of mankind would have but little regarded.

"Accept," said he, "the gratitude of Thy most humble, yet most happy creature, not for silver or gold, the tinsel of mankind, but for those amiable peculiarities which Thou hast so graciously interwoven both with my fortune and my complexion: for those treasures so well adapted to that frame of mind Thou hast assigned me.

"That the surname which has descended to me is liable to no pun.

"That it runs chiefly upon vowels and liquids.

"That I have a picturesque countenance rather than one that is esteemed of regular features.

"That there is an intermediate hill, intercepting my view of a nobleman's seat, whose ill-obtained superiority I cannot bear to recollect.

"That my estate is overrun with brambles, resounds with cataracts, and is beautifully varied with rocks and precipices, rather than an even cultivated spot, fertile of corn, or wine, or oil; or those kinds of productions in which the sons of men delight themselves.

"That as Thou dividest Thy bounties impartially; giving riches to one, and the contempt of riches to another; so Thou hast given me, in the midst of poverty, to despise the insolence

of riches, and by declining all emulation that is founded upon wealth, to maintain the dignity and superiority of the Muses.

" That I have a disposition either so elevated or so ingenuous that I can derive to myself amusement from the very expedients and contrivances with which rigorous necessity furnishes my invention.

" That I can laugh at my own follies, foibles, and infirmities; and that I do not want infirmities to employ this disposition."

This poor gentleman caught cold one winter's night, as he was contemplating, by the side of a crystal stream, by moonshine. This afterwards terminated in a fever that was fatal to him. Since his death I have been favored with the inspection of his poetry, of which I preserved a catalogue for the benefit of my readers.

OCCASIONAL POEMS

On his dog, that growing corpulent, refused a crust when it was offered him.

To the memory of a pair of breeches, that had done him excellent service.

Having lost his trusty walking-staff, he complaineth.

To his mistress, on her declaring that she loved parsnips better than potatoes.

On an ear-wig that crept into a nectarine that it might be swallowed by Cloe.

On cutting an artichoke in his garden the day that Queen Anne cut her little finger.

Epigram on a wooden peg.

Ode to the memory of the great modern—who first invented shoe-buckles.

ON RESERVE

TAKING an evening's walk with a friend in the country, among many grave remarks, he was making the following observation: "There is not," says he, "any one quality so inconsistent with respect as what is commonly called familiarity. You do not find one in fifty whose regard is proof against it. At the same time, it is hardly possible to insist upon such a deference as will render you ridiculous, if it be supported by common-sense. Thus much at least is evident, that your demands will be so successful as to procure a greater share than if you had made no such demand. I may frankly own to you, Leander, that I frequently derived uneasiness from a familiarity with such persons as despised everything they could obtain with ease. Were it not better therefore to be somewhat frugal of our affability, at least to allot it only to few persons of discernment who can make the proper distinction betwixt real dignity and pretended: to neglect those characters which, being impatient to grow familiar, are at the same time very far from familiarity-proof: to have posthumous fame in view, which affords us the most pleasing landscape: to enjoy the amusement of reading, and the consciousness that reading paves the way to general esteem: to preserve a constant regularity of temper, and also of constitution, for the most part but little consistent with a promiscuous intercourse with men: to shun all illiterate, though ever so jovial assemblies, insipid, perhaps, when present, and upon reflection painful: to meditate on those absent or departed friends, who value or valued us for those qualities with which they were best acquainted: to partake with such a friend as you the delights of a studious and rational retirement—are not these the paths that lead to happiness?"

In answer to this (for he seemed to feel some late mortification) I observed that what we lost by familiarity in respect was

generally made up to us by the affection it procured; and that an absolute solitude was so very contrary to our natures, that were he excluded from society but for a single fortnight, he would be exhilarated at the sight of the first beggar that he saw.

What follows were thoughts thrown out in our further discourse upon the subject; without order or connection, as they occur to my remembrance.

Some reserve is a debt to prudence; as freedom and simplicity of conversation is a debt to good-nature.

There would not be any absolute necessity for reserve, if the world were honest: yet, even then, it would prove expedient. For, in order to attain any degree of deference, it seems necessary that people should imagine you have more accomplishments than you discover.

It is on this depends one of the excellences of the judicious Vergil. He leaves you something ever to imagine: and such is the constitution of the human mind, that we think so highly of nothing as of that whereof we do not see the bounds. This, as Mr. Burke ingeniously observes, affords the pleasure when we survey a cylinder;[1] and Sir John Suckling says:

> "They who know all the wealth they have are poor;
> He's only rich who cannot tell his store."

A person who would secure to himself great deference will, perhaps, gain his point by silence as effectually as by anything he can say.

To be, however, a niggard of one's observation is so much worse than to hoard up one's money, as the former may be both imparted and retained at the same time.

Men oftentimes pretend to proportion their respect to real desert; but a supercilious reserve and distance weary them into a compliance with more. This appears so very manifest to many persons of the lofty character that they use no better means to acquire respect than like highwaymen to make a demand of it. They will, like Empedocles, jump into the fire rather than betray the mortal part of their character.

It is from the same principle of distance that nations are brought to believe that their great duke knoweth all things; as is the case in some countries.

[1] "Treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful."

"Men, while no human form or fault they see,
Excuse the want of even humanity;
And Eastern kings, who vulgar views disdain,
Require no worth to fix their awful reign.
You cannot say in truth what may disgrace them,
You know in what predicament to place them.
Alas! in all the glare of light revealed,
Even virtue charms us less than vice concealed!

"For some small worth he had, the man was prized;
He added frankness—and he grew despised."

'We want comets, not ordinary planets:
'*Tædit quotidianarum harum formarum.*'"

"*Hunc cœlum, et stellas, et decendentia certis*
Tempora momentis, sunt qui formidine nulla
Imbuti spectent."

Virtues, like essences, lose their fragrance when exposed. They are sensitive plants, which will not bear too familiar approaches.

Let us be careful to distinguish modesty, which is ever amiable, from reserve, which is only prudent. A man is hated sometimes for pride, when it was an excess of humility gave the occasion.

What is often termed shyness is nothing more than refined sense, and an indifference to common observations.

The reserved man's intimate acquaintance are, for the most part, fonder of him than the persons of a more affable character, *i.e.*, he pays them a greater compliment than the other can do his, as he distinguishes them more.

It is indolence, and the pain of being upon one's guard, that makes one hate an artful character.

The most reserved of men, who would not exchange two syllables together in an English coffee-house, should they meet at Ispahan, would drink sherbet and eat a mess of rice together.

The man of show is vain: the reserved man is proud more properly. The one has greater depth: the other a more lively imagination. The one is more frequently respected: the other more generally beloved. The one a Cato; the other a Cæsar. *Vide* Sallust.

What Cæsar said of *"Rubicupdos amo; pallidos timeo,"* may be applied to familiarity and reserve.

A reserved man often makes it a rule to leave company with a good speech: and I believe sometimes proceeds so far as to leave company because he has made one. Yet it is fate often, like the mole, to imagine himself deep when he is near the surface.

Were it prudent to decline this reserve, and this horror of disclosing foibles; to give up a part of character to secure the rest? The world will certainly insist upon having some part to pull to pieces. Let us throw out some follies to the envious; as we give up counters to a highwayman, or a barrel to a whale, in order to save one's money and one's ship: to let it make exceptions to one's head of hair, if one can escape being stabbed in the heart.

The reserved man should drink double glasses.

Prudent men lock up their motives; letting familiars have a key to their heart as to their garden.

A reserved man is in continual conflict with the social part of his nature; and even grudges himself the laugh into which he is sometimes betrayed.

> "Seldom he smiles—
> And smiles in such a sort as he disdained
> Himself—that could be moved to smile at anything."

"A fool and his words are soon parted;" for so should the proverb run.

Common understanding, like *cits* in gardening, allow no shades to their picture.

Modesty often passes for errant haughtiness: as what is deemed spirit in a horse proceeds from fear.

The higher character a person supports, the more he should regard his minutest actions.

The reserved man should bring a certificate of his honesty, before he be admitted into company.

Reserve is no more essentially connected with understanding than a church organ with devotion, or wine with good-nature.

AN OPINION OF GHOSTS

IT is remarkable how much the belief of ghosts and apparitions of persons departed has lost ground within these fifty years. This may perhaps be explained by the general growth of knowledge, and by the consequent decay of superstition, even in those kingdoms where it is most essentially interwoven with religion.

The same credulity which disposed the mind to believe the miracles of a popish saint set aside at once the interposition of reason, and produced a fondness for the marvellous, which it was the priest's advantage to promote.

It may be natural enough to suppose that a belief of this kind might spread in the days of popish infatuation. A belief, as much supported by ignorance, as the ghosts themselves were indebted to the night.

But whence comes it that narratives of this kind have at any time been given by persons of veracity, of judgment, and of learning—men neither liable to be deceived themselves, nor to be suspected of an inclination to deceive others, though it were their interest; nor who could be supposed to have any interest in it, even though it were their inclination?

Here seems a further explanation wanting than what can be drawn from superstition.

I go upon a supposition that the relations themselves were false. For as to the arguments sometimes used in this case, that had there been no true shilling there had been no counterfeit, it seems wholly a piece of sophistry. The true shilling here should mean the living person; and the counterfeit resemblance, the posthumous figure of him that either strikes our senses or our imagination.

Supposing no ghost then ever appeared, is it a consequence that no man could ever imagine that they saw the figure of a

person deceased? Surely those who say this little know the force, the caprice, or the defects of the imagination.

Persons after a debauch of liquor, or under the influence of terror, or in the deliria of a fever, or in a fit of lunacy, or even walking in their sleep, have had their brain as deeply impressed with chimerical representations as they could possibly have been had their representations struck their senses.

I have mentioned but a few instances wherein the brain is primarily affected. Others may be given, perhaps not quite so common, where the stronger passions, either acute or chronical, have impressed their object upon the brain; and this in so lively a manner as to leave the visionary no room to doubt of their real presence.

How difficult then must it be to undeceive a person as to objects thus imprinted! imprinted absolutely with the same force as their eyes themselves could have portrayed them! and how many persons must there needs be who could never be undeceived at all!

Some of these causes might not improbably have given rise to the notion of apparitions; and when the notion had been once promulgated, it had a natural tendency to produce more instances.

The gloom of night, that was productive of terror, would be naturally productive of apparitions. The event confirmed it.

The passion of grief for a departed friend, of horror for a murdered enemy, of remorse for a wronged testator, of love for a mistress killed by inconstancy, of gratitude to a wife of long fidelity, of desire to be reconciled to one who died at variance, of impatience to vindicate what was falsely construed, of propensity to consult with an adviser that is lost—the more faint as well as the more powerful passions, when bearing relation to a person deceased, have often, I fancy, with concurrent circumstances, been sufficient to exhibit the dead to the living.

But, what is more, there seems no other account that is adequate to the case as I have stated it. Allow this, and you have at once a reason why the most upright may have published a falsehood, and the most judicious confirmed an absurdity.

Supposing then that apparitions of this kind may have some real use in God's moral government: is not any moral purpose, for which they may be employed, as effectually answered on my

supposition, as the other? for surely it cannot be of any importance, by what means the brain receives these images. The effect, the conviction, and the resolution consequent, may be just the same in either of the cases.

Such appears, to me at least, to be the true existence of apparitions.

The reasons against any external apparition, among others that may be brought, are these that follow:

They are, I think, never seen by day; and darkness being the season of terror and uncertainty, and the imagination less restrained, they are never visible to more than one person: which had more probably been the case were not the vision internal.

They have not been reported to have appeared these twenty years. What cause can be assigned, were their existence real, for so great a change as their discontinuance?

The cause of superstition has lost ground for this last century: the notion of ghosts has been altogether exploded: a reason why the imagination should be less prone to conceive them; but not a reason why they themselves should cease.

Most of those who relate that these spectres have appeared to them have been persons either deeply superstitious in other respects; of enthusiastic imaginations, or strong passions, which are the consequence; or else have allowedly felt some perturbation at the time.

Some few instances may be supposed, where the caprice of imagination, so very remarkable in dreams, may have presented phantasms to those that waked. I believe there are few but can recollect some, wherein it has wrought mistakes, at least equal to that of a white horse for a winding-sheet.

To conclude. As my hypothesis supposes the chimera to give terror equal to the reality, our best means of avoiding it is to keep a strict guard over our passions, to avoid intemperance as we would a charnel-house, and, by making frequent appeals to cool reason and common-sense, secure to ourselves the property of a well-regulated imagination.

ON WRITING AND BOOKS

FINE writing is generally the effect of spontaneous thoughts and a labored style.

Long sentences in a short composition are like large rooms in a little house.

The world may be divided into people that read, people that write, people that think, and fox-hunters.

Superficial writers, like the mole, often fancy themselves deep, when they are exceeding near the surface.

There is no word in the Latin language that signifies a female friend. "*Amica*" means a mistress; and perhaps there is no friendship betwixt the sexes wholly disunited from a degree of love.

The chief advantage that ancient writers can boast over modern ones seems owing to simplicity. Every noble truth and sentiment was expressed by the former in the natural manner; in word and phrase, simple, perspicuous, and incapable of improvement. What then remained for later writers but affectation, witticism, and conceit?

Perhaps an acquaintance with men of genius is rather reputable than satisfactory. It is as unaccountable, as it is certain, that fancy heightens sensibility; sensibility strengthens passion; and passion makes people humorists.

Yet a person of genius is often expected to show more discretion than another man; and this on account of that very vivacity which is his greatest impediment. This happens for want of distinguishing betwixt the fanciful talents and the dry mathematical operations of the judgment, each of which indiscriminately gives the denomination of a man of genius.

People in high or in distinguished life ought to have a greater circumspection in regard to their most trivial actions. For instance, I saw Mr. Pope—and what was he doing when you saw him?—why, to the best of my memory, he was picking his nose.

It is obvious to discover that imperfections of one kind have a visible tendency to produce perfections of another. Mr. Pope's bodily disadvantages inclined him to a more laborious cultivation of his talent, without which he foresaw that he must have languished in obscurity. The advantages of person are a good deal essential to popularity in the grave world as well as the gay. Mr. Pope, by an unwearied application to poetry, became not only the favorite of the learned, but also of the ladies.

Pope's talent lay remarkably in what one may naturally enough term the condensation of thoughts. I think no other English poet ever brought so much sense into the same number of lines with equal smoothness, ease, and poetical beauty. Let him who doubts of this peruse his "Essay on Man" with attention. Perhaps this was a talent from which he could not easily have swerved: perhaps he could not have sufficiently rarefied his thoughts to produce that flimsiness which is required in a ballad or love-song. His monster of Ragusa and his translations from Chaucer have some little tendency to invalidate this observation.

The plan of Spenser's "Faerie Queene" appears to me very imperfect. His imagination, though very extensive, is somewhat less so, perhaps, than is generally allowed; if one considers the facility of realizing and equipping forth the virtues and vices. His metre has some advantages, though, in many respects, exceptionable. His good-nature is visible through every part of his poem. His conjunction of the pagan and Christian scheme (as he introduced the deities of both acting simultaneously) is wholly inexcusable. Much art and judgment are discovered in parts, and but little in the whole. One may entertain some doubt whether the perusal of his monstrous descriptions be not as prejudicial to true taste, as it is advantageous to the extent of imagination. Spenser, to be sure, expands the last; but then he expands it beyond its due limits. After all, there are many favorite passages in his "Faerie Queene," which will be instances of a great and cultivated genius misapplied.

Boileau has endeavored to prove, in one of his admirable satires, that man has no manner of pretence to prefer his faculties before those of the brute creation. Oldham has translated

him: my Lord Rochester has imitated him: and even Mr. Pope declares

> "That, reason raise o'er instinct how you can,
> In this 'tis God directs: in that 'tis man."

Indeed, the "Essay on Man" abounds with illustrations of this maxim; and it is amazing to find how many plausible reasons may be urged to support it. It seems evident that our itch of reasoning and spirit of curiosity preclude more happiness than they can possibly advance. What numbers of diseases are entirely artificial things, far from the ability of a brute to contrive! We disrelish and deny ourselves cheap and natural gratifications, through speculative presciences and doubts about the future. We cannot discover the designs of our Creator. We should learn then of brutes to be easy under our ignorance, and, happy in those objects that seem intended, obviously, for our happiness, not overlook the flowers of the garden, and foolishly perplex ourselves with the intricacies of the labyrinth.

ON NORMAN ARCHITECTURE

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ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF LORD BOLINGBROKE

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BY

THOMAS GRAY

THOMAS GRAY

1716—1771

The poet, Thomas Gray, was a man of vast and varied acquirements, whose life was devoted to the cultivation of letters. He was the son of a respectable London money-scrivener, but his father was a man of violent and arbitrary character, and the poet was early left to the tender care of an excellent mother, who had been obliged to separate from her tyrannical husband. He received his education at Eton, and afterwards settled in learned retirement at Cambridge, where he passed nearly the whole of his life. He travelled in France and Italy as tutor to Horace Walpole, but quarrelling with his pupil he returned home alone. Fixing himself at Cambridge, he soon acquired a high poetical reputation by his beautiful "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College," published in 1747, which was followed, at rather long intervals, by his other imposing and highly finished works, the "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard," the "Pindaric Odes," and the far from numerous but splendid productions which make up his works. His quiet and studious retirement was only broken by occasional excursions to the north of England, and other holiday journeys, of which he has given in his letters so vivid and animated a description. His correspondence with his friends, and particularly with the poet Mason, is remarkable for interesting details, descriptions, and reflections, and is indeed, like that of Cowley, among the most delightful records of a thoughtful and literary life. Gray refused the offer of the laureateship, which was proposed to him on the death of Cibber, but accepted the appointment of professor of modern history in the university, though he never performed the functions of that chair, his fastidious temper and indolent self-indulgence keeping him perpetually engaged in forming vast literary projects which he never executed. He appears not to have been popular among his colleagues; his haughty, retiring, and somewhat effeminate character prevented him from sympathizing with the tastes and studies that prevailed there; and he was at little pains to conceal his contempt for academical society.

His industry was untiring, and his acquirements undoubtedly immense; for he had pushed his researches far beyond the usual limits of ancient classical philology, and was not only deeply versed in the romance literature of the Middle Ages, in modern French and Italian, but had studied the then almost unknown departments of Scandinavian and Celtic poetry. Constant traces may be found in all his works of the degree to which he had assimilated the spirit, not only of the Greek lyric poetry, but the finest perfume of the great Italian writers: many passages of his works are a kind of mosaic of thought and imagery borrowed from Pindar, from the choral portions of the Attic tragedy, and from the majestic lyrics of the Italian poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; but though the substance of these mosaics may be borrowed from a multitude of sources, the fragments are, so to say, fused into one solid body by the intense flame of a powerful and fervent imagination. His essays "On Norman Architecture" and "On the Philosophy of Lord Bolingbroke" show the extent of his technical knowledge and his finished style.

ON NORMAN ARCHITECTURE

THE characteristics of the old Norman or (as Sir Christopher Wren calls it) Saxon architecture are great solidity, heaviness, and rude simplicity, better adapted to castles, walls of cities, and other places of defence, than to the purposes of habitation, magnificence, or religious worship. It seems indeed to be copied from the Roman style in that degenerate state to which it was reduced under the later emperors; for it seems but natural that the Franks [1] in Gaul, the Saxons in England, and other barbarous nations in the several countries which had made a part of the Roman empire (when they were once settled there, and found leisure to apply themselves to the arts of peace) should imitate those many monuments which were everywhere before their eyes, and especially (as they themselves were now become Christians) such as had been long consecrated to the uses of religion, and were filled with the miraculous relics and representations of those saints who were the principal objects of their worship. It may be asked, why then did they not rather imitate the beautiful remains of a better age, of which many were then in being, as some of them exist to this day? I answer, because taste had nothing to do in their choice; because the fabrics erected in the time and for the purpose of Christianity had a nearer connection with their own faith; and lastly, because the artisans employed in them were probably their subjects and natives of the country, who received these arts by tradition from their fathers, and were unaccustomed to any other style of building.

The particulars which distinguish this kind of architecture, which seems to have lasted in England from the time of the Conquest (if not earlier) to the beginning of Henry III's reign, that is, from A. D. 1066 to about 1216, are chiefly these:

[1] Including the Normans, who soon learned the language and customs of the Franks.

First distinction. The semicircular, or round-headed,[1] arch, generally, if not always, used in the three orders which commonly compose the nave, namely, the lower great one that opens to the side ailes; the second, which runs in front of the two corridors over those ailes; and the uppermost, which forms a sort of arcade before the higher range of windows. The doors, the vault of the ailes, and even the windows, are in this form too, and the arch is usually wide beyond the just proportion of its height.

The same arching is frequently used to cover the long vacancy of a dead wall, and forms an arcade adhering to it with tall clumsy[2] pillars and extraordinary intercolumns; and for a like purpose they frequently employed a wider arch-work rising on short columns and interlaced, so that the curve of one arch intersecting that of its neighbor, their pillars or legs stand at only half the distance from each other that they otherwise would do. This, though only an ornament, might perhaps suggest the idea of building on pointed arches, afterwards in use, as the intersection of two circular ones produces the same effect to the eye.

Second distinction. The massy piers, or pillars, either of an octagonal, round, or elliptical form, on which the arches rise. They are sometimes decagons, or duodecagons, or even a mixture of all these, without any correspondence or regularity at all, as in the choir at Peterborough: their height is generally far too short for their diameter, which gives them the appearance of great strength joined with heaviness. This latter fault seems to have struck even the eyes of that age itself, and, to conceal it, they added a flat pilaster on four sides of the pier, with a slender half-column projecting from it; or (to lighten it still more) covered the pier almost entirely with clustered pillars of small diameter, adhering to its surface, which in reality bear little or nothing of the weight, and serve merely for ornament. This latter had so good an effect, that it was adopted

[1] I cannot absolutely affirm that they never made use of the pointed arch, because the great western tower at Ely now rises upon four such arches; some of the ranges, too, which adorn the outside of this and the galilee adjoining, are of like form, and the grand arches in front under the middle tower of Peterborough are pointed: but yet I do suspect that all these were alterations and additions made in succeeding ages, which, I am persuaded, was a common practice with regard to windows, in order to let in more light, and also to take off from the plain and heavy appearance of those thick walls.

[2] They have no swell, nor gradual diminution, which seems to be the cause of this clumsy appearance; besides this, they stand too close together.

by all architects of succeeding times, and continued till the revival of the Greek and Roman style. There are very ancient examples of these cluster-piers to be seen, sometimes intermixed alternately with the plainer kind, as at Durham; sometimes interspersed among them, as it were by chance, as at Peterborough; and sometimes alone and unmixed, as in the views of old St. Paul's, and at Ely. From the capital of the piers usually rises a half-column of but small diameter, which, passing between the arches of the two upper orders in the nave or choir, etc., reaches quite up to the roof, and is a principal grace of these buildings.

On the outside, as they have no buttresses, which were the invention of later ages, the walls are commonly adorned either with half-columns or with flat stripes of stone-work, resembling a plain pilaster, at regular distances.

Third distinction. The capitals of the piers and smaller columns have great variety in their forms; the square, the octagon, the cushioned, or swelling beneath, with four flat faces cut in a semicircle, the convex part downward, and sometimes adorned [3] with a mantling, or piece of drapery trussed like a festoon. Some of the large ones there are which, swelling like the last underneath, break above [4] into eight or sixteen angular projections, something like the rostrum of an antique ship. Others are round, and decked with an awkward imitation [5] of acanthus leaves, curling at the point into a sort of volutes. These, and many other uncouth forms and inventions, may be seen in the arcade of the side ailes at Peterborough, where they have studied to vary all the capitals, as far as their art reached, and seem to have thought there was a beauty in this confusion: they are all in general too squat and too gross for the pillars which they are meant to adorn, not to mention the rudeness they have in common with every other member of these buildings, that required any sculpture or delicacy of workmanship.

Fourth distinction. The ceilings, at least in the wider and loftier parts, as of the nave, choir, and transepts, etc., were usually, I imagine, only of timber, perhaps because they wanted the skill to vault with stone in these great intervals, though they

[3] At Durham.
[4] In the choir at Peterborough.
[5] In the prebend's narrow way, and the south transept at Ely.

practised it in the smaller. They are either entirely flat, as at Peterborough, or gable-fashioned with rafters, as in the transepts at Ely, or covered with frame-work made of small scantlings of wood, and lying open to the leads, as in the nave of the same church.

Fifth distinction. The ornaments, which are chiefly mouldings in front of the arches, and fasciæ or broad lists of carving, which run along the walls over them or beneath the windows, are without any neatness, and full as clumsy as the capitals above mentioned; the most frequent of them is the zig-zag, or chevron-work. There are also billeted-moulding, the nail-head, as in the great tower at Hereford and in the pendants of arches in the nave of old St. Paul's, resembling the heads of large nails drove in at regular distances; the nebule,[6] which I call by that name from its likeness to a coat nebulé in heraldry; and the lozenge and triangle lattice-work. These, with the ranges of arch-work rising one over another, with which they decorated the fronts of buildings and the sides of their towers on the outside, are the principal inventions which they employed for ornament. As to statues,[7] niches,[8] canopies, finials, and tracery, they were the improvements of another age.

Such are the most obvious distinctions of this early style of building. An accurate inspection of those remains, which have their dates well ascertained, might possibly discover many other particulars, and also show us the gradual advances of the art within the period which I have assigned; for it is not to be imagined that all the forms which I have described made their appearance at one and the same time, or that the buildings, for example, in the first years of Henry II were exactly like those erected in the end of his reign. Any eye may perceive the difference between the body and ailes of the choir at Peterborough with the east side of the transept, and the semicircular tribune which finishes the same choir, the two ends and west side of the transept, and the whole nave of the church:

[6] Under the highest range of windows on the outside of Peterborough Cathedral, and elsewhere.

[7] There may be some figures extant in England, in stone or wood, older than the period which I have here assigned, but they made no part of the architect's design, and even on sepulchral monuments are very rare; besides that their originality may well be disputed; for example, that of King Ethelbald on Crowland Bridge, of King Osric at Worcester, of Robert Courthose at Gloucester, etc.

[8] These niches, when they had the figure of any saint in them, were called perks, whence comes our old phrase of being perked up, or exposed to public view.

yet all these were built within the compass of five-and-thirty years by two successive abbots.

Upon the whole, these huge structures claim not only the veneration due to their great antiquity, but (though far surpassed in beauty by the buildings of the three succeeding centuries) have really a rude kind of majesty, resulting from the loftiness of their naves, the gloom of their ailes, and the hugeness of their massive members, which seem calculated for a long duration.

ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF LORD BOLINGBROKE

I WILL allow Lord Bolingbroke that the moral, as well as physical, attributes of God must be known to us only *a posteriori,* and that this is the only real knowledge we can have either of the one or the other; I will allow too that perhaps it may be an idle distinction which we make between them: His moral attributes being as much in his nature and essence as those we call his physical; but the occasion of our making some distinction is plainly this: His eternity, infinity, omniscience, and almighty power, are not what connect him, if I may so speak, with us his creatures. We adore him, not because he always did in every place, and always will, exist; but because he gave, and still preserves to us our own existence by an exertion of his goodness. We adore him, not because he knows and can do all things, but because he made us capable of knowing and of doing what may conduct us to happiness. It is therefore his benevolence which we adore, not his greatness or power; and if we are made only to bear our part in a system, without any regard to our own particular happiness, we can no longer worship him as our all-bounteous parent. There is no meaning in the term. The idea of his malevolence (an impiety I tremble to write) must succeed. We have nothing left but our fears, and those too vain; for whither can they lead but to despair and the sad desire of annihilation? "If then, justice and goodness be not the same in God as in our ideas, we mean nothing when we say that God is necessarily just and good; and for the same reason it may as well be said that we know not what we mean when, according to Dr. Clarke (Evid. 26th), we affirm that he is necessarily a wise and intelligent Being." What then can Lord Bolingbroke mean, when he says everything shows the wisdom of God; and yet adds, everything does not show in like manner the goodness of God, conformably

to our ideas of this attribute in either! By wisdom he must only mean, that God knows and employs the fittest means to a certain end, no matter what that end may be. This indeed is a proof of knowledge and intelligence; but these alone do not constitute wisdom; the word implies the application of these fittest means to the best and kindest end: or, who will call it true wisdom? Even amongst ourselves, it is not held as such. All the attributes then that he seems to think apparent in the constitution of things, are his unity, infinity, eternity, and intelligence; from no one of which, I boldly affirm, can result any duty of gratitude or adoration incumbent on mankind, more than if He and all things round him were produced, as some have dared to think, by the necessary working of eternal matter in an infinite vacuum: for what does it avail to add intelligence to those other physical attributes, unless that intelligence be directed, not only to the good of the whole, but also to the good of every individual of which that whole is composed?

It is therefore no impiety, but the direct contrary, to say that human justice and the other virtues, which are indeed only various applications of human benevolence, bear some resemblance to the moral attributes of the Supreme Being. It is only by means of that resemblance we conceive them in him, or their effects in his works. It is by the same means only that we comprehend those physical attributes which his Lordship allows to be demonstrable. How can we form any notion of his unity, but from that unity of which we ourselves are conscious? How of his existence, but from our own consciousness of existing? How of his power, but of that power which we experience in ourselves? Yet neither Lord Bolingbroke nor any other man, that thought on these subjects, ever believed that these our ideas were real and full representations of these attributes in the Divinity. They say he knows; they do not mean that he compares ideas which he acquired from sensation, and draws conclusions from them. They say he acts; they do not mean by impulse, nor as the soul acts on an organized body. They say he is omnipotent and eternal; yet on what are their ideas founded, but on our own narrow conceptions of space and duration, prolonged beyond the bounds of place and time? Either, therefore, there is a resemblance and analogy (however imperfect and distant) between the attributes of the Divinity and our

conceptions of them, or we cannot have any conceptions of them at all. He allows we ought to reason from earth, that we do know, to heaven which we not know; how can we do so but by that affinity which appears between one and the other?

In vain, then, does my lord attempt to ridicule the warm but melancholy imagination of Mr. Wollaston in that fine soliloquy: "Must I then bid my last farewell to these walks when I close these lids, and yonder blue regions and all this scene darken upon me and go out? Must I then only serve to furnish dust to be mingled with the ashes of these herbs and plants, or with this dirt under my feet? Have I been set so far above them in life, only to be levelled with them in death?"[1] No thinking head, no heart, that has the least sensibility, but must have made the same reflection; or at least must feel, not the beauty alone, but the truth of it when he hears it from the mouth of another. Now what reply will Lord Bolingbroke make to these questions which are put to him, not only by Wollaston, but by all mankind? He will tell you, that we, that is, the animals, vegetables, stones, and other clods of earth, are all connected in one immense design, that we are all *dramatis personæ,* in different characters, and that we were not made for ourselves, but for the action: that it is foolish, presumptuous, impious, and profane to murmur against the Almighty Author of this drama, when we feel ourselves unavoidably unhappy. On the contrary, we ought to rest our head on the soft pillow of resignation, on the immovable rock of tranquillity; secure, that, if our pains and afflictions grow violent indeed, an immediate end will be put to our miserable being, and we shall be mingled with the dirt under our feet, a thing common to all the animal kind; and of which he who complains does not seem to have been set by his reason so far above them in life, as to deserve not to be mingled with them in death. Such is the consolation his philosophy gives us, and such the hope on which his tranquillity was founded.

1 "Religion of Nature Delineated," sec. 9, p. 209, quarto.

CHANGE OF STYLE

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BY

HORACE WALPOLE

Earl of Orford

HORACE WALPOLE, EARL OF ORFORD

1717—1797

Horace Walpole, the son of Sir Robert Walpole, the powerful minister of George I, was born in London in 1717, and educated at Eton, where his acquaintance with the poet Gray commenced. In 1734 he went to King's College, Cambridge, and careless of any literary distinction beyond the indulgence of his own tastes, left it without taking a degree. In 1739, after he had obtained by his father's patronage several lucrative appointments, which he retained through life, he went abroad, and travelled, for the most part in company with Gray, through France and Italy. On his return to England, in 1741, he entered Parliament, and sat as member for Callington, Castle Rising, and lastly for Lynn; but though he remained in Parliament till 1768, he appears, after the personal interests attaching to his father's administration had passed away, to have been rather a spectator than an actor in politics, and seldom took any part in debate. For many years he devoted much of his time to the building and embellishment of his Gothic villa at Strawberry Hill, where he accumulated a large collection of pictures, curiosities, and *objets de vertu*. Here also he established a private printing-press, from which most of his own writings and many literary and artistic works by other authors issued. In 1791 he succeeded his nephew as Earl of Orford, but never took his seat in the House of Lords. He died in 1797, in his eightieth year.

Horace Walpole was the author of "The Castle of Otranto," a very successful and popular romance; of a tragedy—"The Mysterious Mother," and of various pamphlets and essays which appeared in the periodicals of the day, as well as of several important catalogues of artists and artistic works; but it is by his "Letters" that he is best known to a later generation. In his "Letters" and "Essays" he appears as a man of the world, witty, ingenious, entertaining, and always graceful. His essay entitled "The Change of Style" was originally contributed to "The World."

CHANGE OF STYLE

THE great men who introduced the reformation[1] into these kingdoms were so sensible of the necessity of maintaining devotion in the minds of the vulgar by some external objects, by somewhat of ceremony and form, that they refrained from entirely ripping off all ornament from the drapery of religion. When they were purging the calendar of legions of visionary saints, they took due care to defend the niches of real martyrs from profanation. They preserved the holy festivals, which had been consecrated for many ages to the great luminaries of the Church, and at once laid proper observance to the memory of the good, and fell in with the popular humor, which loves to rejoice and mourn at the discretion of the almanac.

In so enlightened an age as the present, I shall perhaps be ridiculed if I hint, as my opinion, that the observation of certain festivals is something more than a mere political institution. I cannot, however, help thinking that even nature itself concurs to confirm my sentiment. Philosophers and freethinkers tell us that a general system was laid down at first, and that no deviations have been made to accommodate it to any subsequent events, or to favor and authorize any human institutions. When the reformation of the calendar was in agitation, to the great disgust of many worthy persons, who urged how great the harmony was in the old establishment between the holidays and their attributes (if I may call them so), and what a confusion would follow, if Michaelmas Day, for instance, was not to be celebrated when stubble-geese are in their highest perfection; it was replied that such a propriety was merely imaginary, and would be lost of itself, even without any alteration of the calendar by authority: for if the errors in it were suffered to go on, they would in a certain number of years produce such a varia-

[1] The change of style was introduced by act of Parliament in 1752, ordaining that the fourth of September of that year should be reckoned the fourteenth.

tion, that we should be mourning for good King Charles on a false thirtieth of January, at a time of year when our ancestors used to be tumbling over head and heels in Greenwich Park in honor of Whitsuntide; and at length, be choosing king and queen for the Twelfth-night, when we ought to be admiring the London Prentice at Bartholomew Fair.[2]

Cogent as these reasons may seem, yet I think I can confute them from the testimony of a standing miracle, which, not having submitted to the fallible authority of an act of parliament, may well be said to put a supernatural negative on the wisdom of this world. My readers, no doubt, are already aware that I have in my eye the wonderful thorn of Glastonbury,[3] which, though hitherto regarded as a trunk of popish imposture, has notably exerted itself as the most protestant plant in the universe. It is well known that the correction of the calendar was enacted by Pope Gregory XIII, and that the reformed churches have with a proper spirit of opposition adhered to the old calculation of the Emperor Julius Cæsar, who was by no means a papist. Nearly two years ago the popish calendar was brought in (I hope by persons well affected). Certain it is, that the Glastonbury thorn has preserved its inflexibility, and observes its old anniversary. Many thousand spectators visited it on the parliamentary Christmas Day. Not a bud was there to be seen! On the true nativity it was covered with blossoms. One must be an infidel indeed to spurn at such authority. Had I been consulted (and mathematical studies have not been the most inconsiderable of my speculations), instead of turning the calendar topsy-turvy, by fantastic calculations, I should have proposed to regulate the year by the infallible Somersetshire thorn, and to have reckoned the months from Christmas Day, which should always have been kept as the Glastonbury thorn should blow.

Many inconveniences, to be sure, would follow from this system; but as holy things ought to be the first consideration of a

[2] The fair began every year at Smithfield on August 24th. Originally a cloth market, it lasted in one form or other from the reign of Henry II to 1855.

[3] A famous hawthorn near Glastonbury Abbey in Somersetshire, which was reputed to blossom on Christmas Day. Legend said it was the walking-stick of Joseph of Arimathea. This essay was doubtless suggested to Walpole by a paragraph in the "Gentleman's Magazine," 1753: "A vast concourse of people attended the noted thorn on Christmas Day, new style, but to their great disappointment there was no appearance of its blowing, which made them watch it narrowly the fifth of January, Christmas Day, old style, when it blowed as usual."

religious nation, the inconveniences should be overlooked. The thorn can never blow but on the true Christmas Day; and consequently the apprehension of the year's becoming inverted by sticking to the Julian account can never hold. If the course of the sun varies, astronomers may find out some way to adjust that; but it is preposterous, not to say presumptuous, to be celebrating Christmas Day when the Glastonbury thorn, which certainly must know times and seasons better than an almanac-maker, declares it to be heresy.

Nor is Christmas Day the only jubilee which will be morally disturbed by this innovation. There is another anniversary of no less celebrity among Englishmen, equally marked by a marvellous concomitance of circumstances, and which I venture to prognosticate will not attend the erroneous calculation of the present system. The day I mean is the first of April. The oldest tradition affirms that such an infatuation attends the first day of that month, as no foresight can escape, no vigilance can defeat. Deceit is successful on that day out of the mouths of babes and sucklings. Grave citizens have been bit upon it; usurers have lent their money on bad security; experienced matrons have married very disappointing young fellows; mathematicians have missed the longitude; alchemists, the philosopher's stone; and politicians, preferment, on that day.

What confusion will not follow, if the great body of the nation are disappointed of their peculiar holiday! This country was formerly disturbed with very fatal quarrels about the celebration of Easter; and no wise man will tell me that it is not as reasonable to fall out for the observance of April-fool Day. Can any benefits arising from a regulated calendar make amends for an occasion of new sects? How many warm men may resent an attempt to play them off on a false first of April, who would have submitted to the custom of being made fools on the old computation? If our clergy come to be divided about Folly's anniversary, we may well expect all the mischiefs attendant on religious wars; and we shall have reason to wish that the Glastonbury thorn would declare as remarkably in favor of the true April-fool Day as it has in behalf of the genuine Christmas.

There are many other inconveniences, which I might lament very emphatically, but none of weight enough to be compared

with those I have mentioned. I shall only hint at a whole system overturned by this revolution in the calendar, and no provision, that I have heard of, made by the legislature to remedy it. Yet in a nation which bestows such ample rewards on new-year and birthday odes, it is astonishing that the late act of Parliament should have overlooked that useful branch of our poetry, which consists of couplets, saws, and proverbs peculiar to certain days and seasons. Why was not a new set of distichs provided by the late reformers? Or at least a clause inserted in the act enjoining the poet-laureate, or some beneficial genius, to prepare and new-cast the established rhymes for public use? Were our astronomers so ignorant as to think that the old proverbs would serve for their new-fangled calendar? Could they imagine that St. Swithin would accommodate his rainy planet to the convenience of the calculations? Who that hears the following verses but must grieve for the shepherd and husbandman, who may have all their prognostics confounded, and be at a loss to know beforehand the fate of their markets? Ancient sages sung,

> "If St. Paul be fair and clear,
> Then will betide a happy year;
> But if it either snow or rain,
> Then will be dear all kind of grain:
> And if the wind doth blow aloft,
> Then wars will vex the realm full oft."[4]

I have declared against meddling with politics, and therefore shall say nothing of the important hints contained in the last lines: yet if certain ill-boding appearances abroad should have an ugly end, I cannot help saying that I shall ascribe their evil tendency to our having been lulled asleep by resting our faith on the calm weather on the pretended conversion of St. Paul; whereas it was very blustering on that festival, according to the good old account, as I honestly, though vainly, endeavored to convince a great minister of state, whom I do not think proper to mention.

But to return to April-fool Day; I must beg my readers and admirers to be very particular in their observations on that holi-

[4] It was long believed that the condition of weather on St. Paul's Day, January 25th, determined the character of the whole year. The verses quoted are one of many translations of four mediæval lines beginning, "*Clara dies Pauli bona tempora denotat anni.*"

day, both according to the new and old reckoning. And I beg that they will transmit to me or my secretary, Mr. Dodsley, a faithful and attested account of the hap that betides them or their acquaintance on each of those days; how often and in what manner they make or are made fools; how they miscarry in attempts to surprise, or baffle any snares laid for them. I do not doubt but it will be found that the balance of folly lies greatly on the side of the old first of April; nay, I much question whether infatuation will have any force on what I call false April-fool Day. I should take it very kind if any of my friends, who may happen to be sharpers, would try their success on the fictitious festival; and if they make fewer dupes than ordinary, I flatter myself that they will unite their endeavors with mine in decrying and exploding a reformation which only tends to discountenance good old practices and venerable superstitions.

NATIONAL PREJUDICE

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THE MAN IN BLACK

—

A CLUB OF AUTHORS

—

BEAU TIBBS

—

A CITY NIGHT-PIECE

—

BY

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

1728—1774

Oliver Goldsmith, born 1728, at Pallasmore, in County Longford, was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, 1745-49. After some studies at Leyden he took a medical degree at Louvain, and travelled on foot through a part of the Continent, 1754-55. Having tried without success to earn his livelihood as a schoolmaster, he became a hack-writer for booksellers in 1757. He attracted the attention of critics by the essays entitled "The Citizen of the World," in 1760; and in 1764 produced his two most successful works, "The Traveller," a poem, and the "Vicar of Wakefield," a novel. From that time, partly as an essayist, partly as a writer for the stage, Goldsmith kept himself constantly before the public. He produced another classical poem, the "Deserted Village," in 1770, and compiled school histories of Rome, England, and Greece, and a "History of Animated Nature," for the London booksellers, 1767-73. But, careless of making or saving money, Goldsmith was always in difficulties, and his early death, in 1774, was probably hastened by mental disquietude.

The peculiar merits of Goldsmith's writings are clearness of thought, ease of style, and simple language. He never writes for effect, and there is scarcely a sentence in his works that a child might not understand. Yet in powers of judgment and thought, as well as in warm and deep sympathies, he was far above the great mass of his contemporaries. He was the first to predict the French Revolution and the Swedish *coup d'état*. He is perhaps the only writer of his times who thoroughly understood the social condition of the Continent. Nor was he less observant of English society, and the "Deserted Village" has been often quoted by economists in illustration of the change which has gradually substituted large estates for the small holdings of a numerous yeomanry. All the essays given here are taken from "The Citizen of the World."

NATIONAL PREJUDICE

THE English seem as silent as the Japanese, yet vainer than the inhabitants of Siam. Upon my arrival I attributed that reserve to modesty, which I now find has its origin in pride. Condescend to address them first and you are sure of their acquaintance; stoop to flattery and you conciliate their friendship and esteem. They bear hunger, cold, fatigue, and all the miseries of life without shrinking; danger only calls forth their fortitude; they even exult in calamity: but contempt is what they cannot bear. An Englishman fears contempt more than death; he often flies to death as a refuge from its pressure, and dies when he fancies the world has ceased to esteem him.

Pride seems the source not only of their national vices, but of their national virtues also. An Englishman is taught to love the king as his friend, but to acknowledge no other master than the laws which himself has contributed to enact. He despises those nations who, that one may be free, are all content to be slaves; who first lift a tyrant into terror, and then shrink under his power as if delegated from heaven. Liberty is echoed in all their assemblies; and thousands might be found ready to offer up their lives for the sound, though perhaps not one of all the number understands its meaning. The lowest mechanic, however, looks upon it as his duty to be a watchful guardian of his country's freedom, and often uses a language that might seem haughty even in the mouth of the great emperor who traces his ancestry to the moon.

A few days ago, passing by one of their prisons, I could not avoid stopping, in order to listen to a dialogue which I thought might afford me some entertainment. The conversation was carried on between a debtor through the grate of his prison, a porter, who had stopped to rest his burden, and a soldier at the window. The subject was upon a threatened invasion from

France, and each seemed extremely anxious to rescue his country from the impending danger. "For my part," cries the prisoner, "the greatest of my apprehension is for our freedom; if the French should conquer, what would become of English liberty? My dear friends, liberty is the Englishman's prerogative; we must preserve that at the expense of our lives; of that the French shall never deprive us. It is not to be expected that men who are slaves themselves would preserve our freedom should they happen to conquer." "Ay, slaves," cries the porter, "they are all slaves, fit only to carry burdens, every one of them. Before I would stoop to slavery let this be my poison" (and he held the goblet in his hand), "may this be my poison; but I would sooner list for a soldier."

The soldier, taking the goblet from his friend with much awe, fervently cried out, "It is not so much our liberties as our religion that would suffer by such a change: ay, our religion, my lads. May the devil sink me into flames" (such was the solemnity of his adjuration) "if the French should come over, but our religion would be utterly undone." So saying, instead of a libation, he applied the goblet to his lips, and confirmed his sentiments with a ceremony of the most persevering devotion.

In short, every man here pretends to be a politician; even the fair sex are sometimes found to mix the severity of national altercation with the blandishments of love, and often become conquerors by more weapons of destruction than their eyes.

This universal passion for politics is gratified by daily gazettes, as with us in China. But as in ours the emperor endeavors to instruct his people, in theirs the people endeavor to instruct the administration. You must not, however, imagine that they who compile these papers have any actual knowledge of the politics or the government of a state; they only collect their materials from the oracle of some coffee-house, which oracle has himself gathered them the night before from a beau at a gaming-table, who has pillaged his knowledge from a great man's porter, who has had his information from the great man's gentleman, who has invented the whole story for his own amusement the night preceding.

The English, in general, seem fonder of gaining the esteem than the love of those they converse with. This gives a formality to their amusements: their gayest conversations have some-

thing too wise for innocent relaxation: though in company you are seldom disgusted with the absurdity of a fool, you are seldom lifted into rapture by those strokes of vivacity which give instant though not permanent pleasure.

What they want, however, in gayety, they make up in politeness. You smile at hearing me praise the English for their politeness—you who have heard very different accounts from the missionaries at Pekin, who have seen such a different behavior in their merchants and seamen at home. But I must still repeat it, the English seem more polite than any of their neighbors: their great art in this respect lies in endeavoring, while they oblige, to lessen the force of the favor. Other countries are fond of obliging a stranger, but seem desirous that he should be sensible of the obligation. The English confer their kindness with an appearance of indifference, and give away benefits with an air as if they despised them.

Walking, a few days ago, between an English and a French man, into the suburbs of the city, we were overtaken by a heavy shower of rain. I was unprepared; but they had each large coats, which defended them from what seemed to me a perfect inundation. The Englishman, seeing me shrink from the weather, accosted me thus: "Psha, man, what dost shrink at? Here, take this coat; I don't want it; I find it no way useful to me; I had as lief be without it." The Frenchman began to show his politeness in turn. "My dear friend," cries he, "why don't you oblige me by making use of my coat? you see how well it defends me from the rain; I should not choose to part with it to others, but to such a friend as you I could even part with my skin to do him service."

From such minute instances as these, most reverend Fum Hoam, I am sensible your sagacity will collect instruction. The volume of nature is the book of knowledge; and he becomes most wise who makes the most judicious selection.—Farewell.

THE MAN IN BLACK

THOUGH fond of my acquaintances, I desire an intimacy only with a few. The Man in Black, whom I have often mentioned, is one whose friendship I could wish to acquire, because he possesses my esteem. His manners, it is true, are tinctured with some strange inconsistencies; and he may be justly termed a humorist in a nation of humorists. Though he is generous even to profusion, he affects to be thought a prodigy of parsimony and prudence: though his conversation be replete with the most sordid and selfish maxims, his heart is dilated with the most unbounded love. I have known him profess himself a man-hater, while his cheek was glowing with compassion; and while his looks were softened into pity, I have heard him use the language of the most unbounded ill-nature. Some affect humanity and tenderness, others boast of having such dispositions from nature; but he is the only man I ever knew who seemed ashamed of his natural benevolence. He takes as much pains to hide his feelings as any hypocrite would to conceal his indifference; but on every unguarded moment the mask drops off, and reveals him to the most superficial observer.

In one of our late excursions into the country, happening to discourse upon the provision that was made for the poor in England, he seemed amazed how any of his countrymen could be so foolishly weak as to relieve occasional objects of charity, when the laws had made such ample provision for their support. "In every parish-house," says he, "the poor are supplied with food, clothes, fire, and a bed to lie on; they want no more, I desire no more myself; yet still they seem discontented. I am surprised at the inactivity of our magistrates in not taking up such vagrants, who are only a weight upon the industrious; I am surprised that the people are found to relieve them, when they must be at the same time sensible that it in some measure encourages idleness, extravagance, and imposture. Were I to advise any man for whom I had the least regard, I would cau-

tion him by all means not to be imposed upon by their false pretences: let me assure you, sir, they are impostors, every one of them, and rather merit a prison than relief."

He was proceeding in this strain earnestly to dissuade me from an imprudence of which I am seldom guilty, when an old man, who still had about him the remnants of tattered finery, implored our compassion. He assured us he was no common beggar, but forced into the shameful profession to support a dying wife and five hungry children. Being prepossessed against such falsehoods, his story had not the least influence upon me; but it was quite otherwise with the Man in Black: I could see it visibly operate upon his countenance, and effectually interrupt his harangue. I could easily perceive that his heart burned to relieve the five starving children, but he seemed ashamed to discover his weakness to me. While he thus hesitated between compassion and pride, I pretended to look another way, and he seized this opportunity of giving the poor petitioner a piece of silver, bidding him at the same time, in order that I should hear, go work for his bread, and not tease passengers with such impertinent falsehoods for the future.

As he had fancied himself quite unperceived, he continued, as we proceeded, to rail against beggars with as much animosity as before: he threw in some episodes on his own amazing prudence and economy, with his profound skill in discovering impostors; he explained the manner in which he would deal with beggars were he a magistrate, hinted at enlarging some of the prisons for their reception, and told two stories of ladies that were robbed by beggar-men. He was beginning a third to the same purpose, when a sailor with a wooden leg once more crossed our walks, desiring our pity, and blessing our limbs. I was for going on without taking any notice, but my friend, looking wistfully upon the poor petitioner, bid me stop, and he would show with how much ease he could at any time detect an impostor.

He now, therefore, assumed a look of importance, and in an angry tone began to examine the sailor, demanding in what engagement he was thus disabled and rendered unfit for service. The sailor replied, in a tone as angrily as he, that he had been an officer on board a private ship of war, and that he had lost his leg abroad in defence of those who did nothing at home. At this reply, all my friend's importance vanished in a moment;

he had not a single question more to ask; he now only studied what method he should adopt to relieve him unobserved. He had, however, no easy part to act, as he was obliged to preserve the appearance of ill-nature before me, and yet relieve himself by relieving the sailor. Casting, therefore, a furious look upon some bundles of chips which the fellow carried in a string at his back, my friend demanded how he sold his matches; but, not waiting for a reply, desired, in a surly tone, to have a shilling's worth. The sailor seemed at first surprised at his demand, but soon recollecting himself, and presenting his whole bundle, "Here, master," says he, "take all my cargo, and a blessing into the bargain."

It is impossible to describe with what an air of triumph my friend marched off with his new purchase: he assured me that he was firmly of opinion that those fellows must have stolen their goods, who could thus afford to sell them for half value. He informed me of several different uses to which those chips might be applied; he expatiated largely upon the savings that would result from lighting candles with a match, instead of thrusting them into the fire. He averred that he would as soon have parted with a tooth as his money to those vagabonds unless for some valuable consideration. I cannot tell how long this panegyric upon frugality and matches might have continued, had not his attention been called off by another object more distressing than either of the former. A woman in rags, with one child in her arms, and another on her back, was attempting to sing ballads, but with such a mournful voice that it was difficult to determine whether she was singing or crying. A wretch, who in the deepest distress still aimed at good-humor, was an object my friend was by no means capable of withstanding: his vivacity and his discourse were instantly interrupted; upon this occasion, his very dissimulation had forsaken him. Even in my presence he immediately applied his hands to his pockets, in order to relieve her: but guess his confusion when he found he had already given away all the money he carried about him to former objects. The misery painted in the woman's visage was not half so strongly expressed as the agony in his. He continued to search for some time, but to no purpose, till, at length recollecting himself, with a face of ineffable good-nature, as he had no money, he put into her hands his shilling's worth of matches.

A CLUB OF AUTHORS

BY my last advices from Moscow I find the caravan has not yet departed from China. I still continue to write, expecting that you may receive a large number of letters at once. In them you will find rather a minute detail of English peculiarities than a general picture of their manners or dispositions. Happy it were for mankind, if all travellers would thus, instead of characterizing a people in general terms, lead us into a detail of those minute circumstances which first influenced their opinion. The genius of a country should be investigated with a kind of experimental inquiry; by this means we should have more precise and just notions of foreign nations, and detect travellers themselves when they happened to form wrong conclusions.

My friend and I repeated our visit to the club of authors, where, upon our entrance, we found the members all assembled and engaged in a loud debate.

The poet in shabby finery, holding a manuscript in his hand, was earnestly endeavoring to persuade the company to hear him read the first book of a heroic poem which he had composed the day before. But against this all the members very warmly objected. They knew no reason why any member of the club should be indulged with a particular hearing, when many of them had published whole volumes which had never been looked in. They insisted that the law should be observed, where reading in company was expressly noticed. It was in vain that the poet pleaded the peculiar merit of his piece; he spoke to an assembly insensible to all his remonstrances: the book of laws was opened and read by the secretary, where it was expressly enacted, "That whatsoever poet, speech-maker, critic, or historian, should presume to engage the company by reading his own works, he was to lay down sixpence previous to opening the manuscript, and should be charged one shilling an hour while he continued reading, the said shilling to be equally

distributed among the company as a recompense for their trouble."

Our poet seemed at first to shrink at the penalty, hesitating for some time whether he should deposit the fine or shut up the poem; but, looking round, and perceiving two strangers in the room, his love of fame outweighed his prudence, and laying down the sum by law established, he insisted on his prerogative.

A profound silence ensuing, he began by explaining his design. "Gentlemen," says he, "the present piece is not one of your common epic poems which come from the press like paper kites in summer; there are none of your Turnuses or Didos in it; it is an heroical description of nature. I only beg you'll endeavor to make your souls unison with mine, and hear with the same enthusiasm with which I have written. The poem begins with the description of an author's bedchamber; the picture was sketched in my own apartment; for you must know, gentlemen, that I am myself the hero." Then, putting himself into the attitude of an orator, with all the emphasis of voice and action, he proceeded:—

"Where the Red Lion, flaring o'er the way,
Invites each passing stranger that can pay;
Where Calvert's Butt and Parson's black champagne
Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury-lane:
There, in a lonely room, from bailiffs snug,
The Muse found Scroggen stretched beneath a rug.
A window, patched with paper, lent a ray,
That dimly showed the state in which he lay;
The sanded floor, that grits beneath the tread;
The humid wall, with paltry pictures spread;
The royal game of goose was there in view,
And the twelve rules the Royal Martyr drew;
The Seasons, framed with listing, found a place,
And brave Prince William showed his lampblack face.
The morn was cold; he views with keen desire
The rusty grate, unconscious of a fire;
With beer and milk arrears the frieze was scored.
And five cracked teacups dressed the chimney board,
A night-cap decked his brows instead of bay;
A cap by night—a stocking all the day!"[1]

[1] For the whole description *cf.* "The Deserted Village," l. 225-236. The "game of goose" resembles backgammon; the "twelve rules" ascribed by tradition to Charles I were such as "Reveal no secrets," "Make no long meals"; "listing" is a frame of useless parings of unpolished wood; "lampblack face" refers to the cheap silhouettes of William and Mary, sold in large numbers by Elizabeth Pyberg in 1699.

With this last line he seemed so much elated that he was unable to proceed. "There, gentlemen!" cries he, "there is a description for you; Rabelais's bedchamber is but a fool to it:

'A cap by night—a stocking all the day!'

There is sound, and sense, and truth, and nature in the trifling compass of ten little syllables."

He was too much employed in self-admiration to observe the company, who, by nods, winks, shrugs, and stifled laughter, testified every mark of contempt. He turned severally to each for their opinion, and found all, however, ready to applaud. One swore it was inimitable, another said it was damned fine, and a third cried out in a rapture, "*Clarissimo!*" At last, addressing himself to the president, "And pray, Mr. Squint," says he, "let us have your opinion." "Mine," answered the president, taking the manuscript out of the author's hand; "may this glass suffocate me, but I think it equal to anything I have seen; and I fancy," continued he, doubling up the poem and forcing it into the author's pocket, "that you will get great honor when it comes out; *ex pede Herculem*, we are satisfied, perfectly satisfied." The author made two or three attempts to pull it out a second time, and the president made as many to prevent him. Thus, though with reluctance, he was at last obliged to sit down, contented with the commendations for which he had paid.

When this tempest of poetry and praise was blown over, one of the company changed the subject, by wondering how any man could be so dull as to write poetry at present, since prose itself would hardly pay. "Would you think it, gentlemen," continued he, "I have actually written last week sixteen prayers, twelve ribald jests, and three sermons, all at the rate of sixpence apiece; and, what is still more extraordinary, the bookseller had lost by the bargain? Such sermons would once have gained me a prebend's stall; but now, alas! we have neither piety, taste, nor humor among us. Positively, if this season does not turn out better than it has begun, unless the ministry commit some blunders to furnish us with a new topic of abuse, I shall resume my old business of working at the press, instead of finding it employment."

The whole club seemed to join in condemning the season as

one of the worst that had come for some time: a gentleman particularly observed that the nobility were never known to subscribe worse than at present. "I know not how it happens," said he, "though I follow them up as close as possible, yet I can hardly get a single subscription in a week. The houses of the great are as inaccessible as a frontier garrison at midnight. I never see a nobleman's door half opened, that some surly porter or footman does not stand full in the breach. I was yesterday to wait with a subscription proposal upon my Lord Squash, the Creolian. I had posted myself at his door the whole morning, and just as he was getting into his coach, thrust my proposal snug into his hand, folded up in the form of a letter from myself. He just glanced at the superscription, and, not knowing the hand, consigned it to his *valet-de-chambre;* this respectable personage treated it as his master, and put it into the hands of the porter; the porter grasped my proposal frowning; and, measuring my figure from top to toe, put it back in my own hands unopened."

"To the devil I pitch all the nobility," cries a little man in a peculiar accent; "I am sure they have of late used me most scurvily. You must know, gentlemen, some time ago, upon the arrival of a certain noble duke from his travels, I sat myself down, and vamped up a fine flaunting poetical panegyric, which I had written in such a strain that I fancied it would have even wheedled milk from a mouse. In this I represented the whole kingdom welcoming His Grace to his native soil, not forgetting the loss France and Italy would sustain in their arts by his departure. I expected to touch for a bank-bill at least; so, folding up my verses in gilt paper, I gave my last half-crown to a genteel servant to be the bearer. My letter was safely conveyed to His Grace, and the servant, after four hours' absence, during which time I led the life of a fiend, returned with a letter four times as big as mine. Guess my ecstasy at the prospect of so fine a return. I eagerly took the packet into my hands that trembled to receive it. I kept it some time unopened before me, brooding over the expected treasure it contained; when opening it, as I hope to be saved, gentlemen, His Grace had sent me, in payment for my poem, no bank-bills, but six copies of verses, each longer than mine, addressed to him upon the same occasion."

"A nobleman," cries a member who had hitherto been silent, "is created as much for the confusion of us authors as the catchpole.[2] I'll tell you a story, gentlemen, which is as true as that this pipe is made of clay:—When I was delivered of my first book, I owed my tailor for a suit of clothes; but that is nothing new, you know, and may be any man's case as well as mine. Well, owing him for a suit of clothes, and hearing that my book took very well, he sent for his money, and insisted upon being paid immediately. Though I was at that time rich in fame—for my book ran like wild-fire—yet I was very short in money, and, being unable to satisfy his demand, prudently resolved to keep my chamber, preferring a prison of my own choosing at home to one of my tailor's choosing abroad. In vain the bailiffs used all their arts to decoy me from my citadel; in vain they sent to let me know that a gentleman wanted to speak with me at the next tavern; in vain they came with an urgent message from my aunt in the country; in vain I was told that a particular friend was at the point of death and desired to take his last farewell. I was deaf, insensible, rock, adamant; the bailiffs could make no impression on my hard heart, for I effectually kept my liberty by never stirring out of the room.

"This was very well for a fortnight; when one morning I received a most splendid message from the Earl of Doomsday, importing that he had read my book, and was in raptures with every line of it; he impatiently longed to see the author, and had some designs which might turn out greatly to my advantage. I paused upon the contents of this message, and found there could be no deceit, for the card was gilt at the edges, and the bearer, I was told, had quite the looks of a gentleman. Witness, ye powers, how my heart triumphed at my own importance! I saw a long perspective of felicity before me; I applauded the taste of the times which never saw genius forsaken; I had prepared a set introductory speech for the occasion; five glaring compliments for his lordship, and two more modest for myself. The next morning, therefore, in order to be punctual to my appointment, I took coach, and ordered the fellow to drive to the street and house mentioned in his lordship's address. I had the precaution to pull up the window as I went along, to keep off the busy part of mankind, and, big with ex-

[2] Sheriff's officer.

pectation, fancied the coach never went fast enough. At length, however, the wished-for moment of its stopping arrived: this for some time I impatiently expected, and letting down the window in a transport, in order to take a previous view of his lordship's magnificent palace and situation, I found—poison to my sight!—I found myself not in an elegant street, but a paltry lane, not at a nobleman's door, but the door of a sponging-house. I found the coachman had all this while been driving me to jail; and I saw the bailiff, with a devil's face, coming out to secure me."

To a philosopher no circumstance, however trifling, is too minute; he finds instruction and entertainment in occurrences which are passed over by the rest of mankind as low, trite, and indifferent; it is from the number of these particulars, which to many appear insignificant, that he is at last enabled to form general conclusions: this, therefore, must be my excuse for sending so far as China accounts of manners and follies, which, though minute in their own nature, serve more truly to characterize this people than histories of their public treaties, courts, ministers, negotiations and ambassadors.—Adieu.

BEAU TIBBS

THE people of London are as fond of walking as our friends at Pekin of riding: one of the principal entertainments of the citizens here in summer is to repair about nightfall to a garden [1] not far from town, where they walk about, show their best clothes and best faces, and listen to a concert provided for the occasion.

I accepted an invitation a few evenings ago from my old friend, the Man in Black, to be one of a party that was to sup there; and at the appointed hour waited upon him at his lodgings. There I found the company assembled, and expecting my arrival. Our party consisted of my friend, in superlative finery, his stockings rolled, a black velvet waistcoat, which was formerly new, and a gray wig combed down in imitation of hair; a pawnbroker's widow, of whom, by the by, my friend was a professed admirer, dressed out in green damask, with three gold rings on every finger; Mr. Tibbs, the second-rate beau I have formerly described; together with his lady, in flimsy silk, dirty gauze instead of linen, and a hat as big as an umbrella.

Our first difficulty was in settling how we should set out. Mrs. Tibbs had a natural aversion to the water, and the widow, being a little in flesh, as warmly protested against walking; a coach was therefore agreed upon; which being too small to carry five, Mr. Tibbs consented to sit in his wife's lap.

In this manner, therefore, we set forward, being entertained by the way with the bodings of Mr. Tibbs, who assured us he did not expect to see a single creature for the evening above the degree of a cheesemonger; that this was the last night of the gardens, and that consequently we should be pestered with the nobility and gentry from Thames-street and Crooked-lane; with

[1] Spring Garden, the earlier name of the gardens, was taken from a pleasure resort near St. James's Park, which contained a "playfully contrived waterwork, which on being unguardedly pressed by the foot sprinkled the bystanders." For a charming account of Vauxhall and its associations see Mr. Dobson's essay referred to in the note on page 220.

several other prophetic ejaculations, probably inspired by the uneasiness of his situation.

The illuminations began before we arrived, and I must confess, that upon entering the gardens I found every sense overpaid with more than expected pleasure: the lights everywhere glimmering through the scarcely moving trees—the full-bodied concert bursting on the stillness of the night—the natural concert of the birds, in the more retired part of the grove, vying with that which was formed by art—the company gayly dressed, looking satisfaction—and the tables spread with various delicacies—all conspired to fill my imagination with the visionary happiness of the Arabian lawgiver, and lifted me into an ecstasy of admiration. "Head of Confucius," cried I to my friend, "this is fine! this united rural beauty with courtly magnificence! if we except the virgins of immortality, that hang on every tree, I do not see how this falls short of Mahomet's paradise!" "As for that," cries my friend, "if ladies, as plenty as apples in autumn, can content you, I fancy we have no need to go to heaven for paradise."

I was going to second his remarks, when we were called to a consultation by Mr. Tibbs and the rest of the company, to know in what manner we were to lay out the evening to the greatest advantage. Mrs. Tibbs was for keeping the genteel walk of the garden, where, she observed, there was always the very best company; the widow, on the contrary, who came but once a season, was for securing a good standing place to see the waterworks, which she assured us would begin in less than an hour at furthest; a dispute therefore began, and as it was managed between two of very opposite characters, it threatened to grow more bitter at every reply. Mrs. Tibbs wondered how people could pretend to know the polite world, who had received all their rudiments of breeding behind a counter; to which the other replied, that though some people sat behind counters, yet they could sit at the head of their own tables too, and carve three good dishes of hot meat whenever they thought proper; which was more than some people could say for themselves, that hardly knew a rabbit and onions from a green goose and gooseberries.

It is hard to say where this might have ended, had not the husband, who probably knew the impetuosity of his wife's disposi-

tion, proposed to end the dispute by adjourning to a box, and try if there was anything to be had for supper that was supportable. To this we all consented; but here a new distress arose: Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs would sit in none but genteel box—a box where they might see and be seen—one, as they expressed it, in the very focus of public view; but such a box was not easy to be obtained, for though we were perfectly convinced of our own gentility, and the gentility of our appearance, yet we found it a difficult matter to persuade the keepers of the boxes to be of our opinion; they chose to reserve genteel boxes for what they judged more genteel company.

At last, however, we were fixed, though somewhat obscurely, and supplied with the usual entertainment of the place. The widow found the supper excellent, but Mrs. Tibbs thought everything detestable. "Come, come, my dear," cried the husband, by way of consolation, "to be sure we can't find such dressing here as we have at Lord Crump's or Lady Crimp's; but, for Vauxhall dressing, it is pretty good: it is not their victuals, indeed, I find fault with, but their wine; their wine," cries he, drinking off a glass, "indeed, is most abominable."

By this last contradiction the widow was fairly conquered in point of politeness. She perceived now that she had no pretensions in the world to taste; her very senses were vulgar, since she had praised detestable custard, and smacked at wretched wine; she was therefore content to yield the victory, and for the rest of the night to listen and improve. It is true, she would now and then forget herself, and confess she was pleased; but they soon brought her back again to miserable refinement. She once praised the painting of the box in which we were sitting, but was soon convinced that such paltry pieces ought rather to excite horror than satisfaction: she ventured again to commend one of the singers, but Mrs. Tibbs soon let her know, in the style of a connoisseur, that the singer in question had neither ear, voice, nor judgment.

Mr. Tibbs, now willing to prove that his wife's pretensions to music were just, entreated her to favor the company with a song; but to this she gave a positive denial—"For you know very well, my dear," says she, "that I am not in voice to-day, and when one's voice is not equal to one's judgment, what signifies singing? besides, as there is no accompaniment, it would

be but spoiling music." All these excuses, however, were overruled by the rest of the company, who, though one would think they already had music enough, joined in the entreaty. But particularly the widow, now willing to convince the company of her breeding, pressed so warmly, that she seemed determined to take no refusal. At last, then, the lady complied, and after humming for some minutes, began with such a voice, and such affectation, as I could perceive gave but little satisfaction to any except her husband. He sat with rapture in his eye, and beat time with his hand on the table.

You must observe, my friend, that it is the custom of this country, when a lady or gentleman happens to sing, for the company to sit as mute and motionless as statues. Every feature, every limb, must seem to correspond in fixed attention; and while the song continues, they are to remain in a state of universal petrifaction. In this mortifying situation we had continued for some time, listening to the song, and looking with tranquillity, when the master of the box came to inform us, that the waterworks [2] were going to begin. At this information I could instantly perceive the widow bounce from her seat; but, correcting herself, she sat down again, repressed by motives of good breeding. Mrs. Tibbs, who had seen the waterworks an hundred times, resolving not to be interrupted, continued her song without any share of mercy, nor had the smallest pity on our impatience. The widow's face, I own, gave me high entertainment; in it I could plainly read the struggle she felt between good breeding and curiosity; she talked of the waterworks the whole evening before, and seemed to have come merely in order to see them; but then she could not bounce out in the very middle of a song, for that would be forfeiting all pretensions to high life, or high-lived company, ever after. Mrs. Tibbs, therefore, kept on singing, and we continued to listen, till at last, when the song was just concluded, the waiter came to inform us that the waterworks were over.

"The waterworks over!" cried the widow; "the waterworks over already! that's impossible! they can't be over so

[2] "In Goldsmith's day it (the water show) was still in the elementary stage described by Sylvanus Urban in August, 1765, that is to say, it exhibited 'a beautiful landscape in perspective, with a miller's house, a water-mill, and a cascade.' At the proper moment this last presented the exact appearance of water flowing down a declivity, rising up in a foam at the bottom, and then gliding away."—Dobson's "Vignettes," vol. i. p. 243.

soon!" "It is not my business," replied the fellow, "to contradict your ladyship; I'll run again and see." He went, and soon returned with a confirmation of the dismal tidings. No ceremony could now bind my friend's disappointed mistress. She testified her displeasure in the openest manner; in short, she now began to find fault in turn, and at last insisted upon going home, just at the time Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs assured the company that the polite hours were going to begin, and that the ladies would instantaneously be entertained with the horns.—Adieu.

A CITY NIGHT-PIECE

THE clock just struck two, the expiring taper rises and sinks in the socket, the watchman forgets the hour in slumber, the laborious and the happy are at rest, and nothing wakes but meditation, guilt, revelry, and despair. The drunkard once more fills the destroying bowl, the robber walks his midnight round, and the suicide lifts his guilty arm against his own sacred person.

Let me no longer waste the night over the page of antiquity, or the sallies of contemporary genius, but pursue the solitary walk, where vanity, ever changing, but a few hours past walked before me; where she kept up the pageant, and now, like a froward child, seems hushed with her own importunities.

What a gloom hangs all around! The dying lamp feebly emits a yellow gleam; no sound in heard but of the chiming clock, or the distant watch-dog. All the bustle of human pride is forgotten; an hour like this may well display the emptiness of human vanity.

There will come a time when this temporary solitude may be made continual, and the city itself, like its inhabitants, fade away, and leave a desert in its room.

What cities as great as this have once triumphed in existence, had their victories as great, joy as just, and as unbounded; and, with short-sighted presumption, promised themselves immortality! Posterity can hardly trace the situation of some; the sorrowful traveller wanders over the awful ruins of others; and, as he beholds, he learns wisdom, and feels the transience of every sublunary possession.

"Here," he cries, "stood their citadel, now grown over with weeds; there their senate house, but now the haunt of every noxious reptile; temples and theatres stood here, now only an undistinguished heap of ruin. They are fallen, for luxury and avarice first made them feeble. The rewards of the State were conferred on amusing and not on useful members of society.

Their riches and opulence invited the invaders, who, though at first repulsed, returned again, conquered by perseverance, and at last swept the defendants into undistinguished destruction."

How few appear in those streets which but some few hours ago were crowded! and those who appear now no longer wear their daily mask, nor attempt to hide their lewdness or their misery.

But who are those who make the streets their couch, and find a short repose from wretchedness at the doors of the opulent? These are strangers, wanderers, and orphans, whose circumstances are too humble to expect redress, and whose distresses are too great even for pity. Their wretchedness excites rather horror than pity. Some are without the covering even of rags, and others emaciated with disease; the world has disclaimed them; society turns its back upon their distress, and has given them up to nakedness and hunger. These poor shivering females have once seen happier days, and been flattered into beauty. They have been prostituted to the gay luxurious villain, and are now turned out to meet the severity of winter. Perhaps, now lying at the doors of their betrayers, they sue to wretches whose hearts are insensible, to debauchees who may curse but will not relieve them.

Why, why was I born a man, and yet see the sufferings of wretches I cannot relieve? Poor houseless creatures! the world will give you reproaches, but will not give you relief. The slightest misfortunes of the great, the most imaginary uneasiness of the rich, are aggravated with all the power of eloquence, and held up to engage our attention and sympathetic sorrow. The poor weep unheeded, persecuted by every subordinate species of tyranny; and every law which gives others security becomes an enemy to them.

Why was this heart of mine formed with so much sensibility? or why was not my fortune adapted to its impulse? Tenderness, without a capacity of relieving, only makes the man who feels it more wretched than the object which sues for assistance. —Adieu.

ON TASTE

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BY

EDMUND BURKE

EDMUND BURKE

1729—1797

Burke was a man of powerful and versatile genius, carrying the fervor and imagery of a great orator into philosophical discussion, and uniting in himself the highest qualities of the statesman, the writer, and the philosopher. His predominant quality was a burning and dazzling enthusiasm for whatever object attracted his sympathies, and in the service of this enthusiasm he impressed all the disciplined forces of his learning, his logic, and his historical and political knowledge. His mind resembled the Puritan regiments of Cromwell, which moved to battle with the precision of machines, while burning with the fiercest ardor of fanaticism. His sympathies were indeed generally excited by generous pity for misfortune, and horror at cruelty and injustice; but, as in the case of his rupture with Fox, his splendid oratorical display in the impeachment of Warren Hastings, and his furious denunciation of the French Revolution, the very excess of his tenderness made him cruel, and the vehemence of his detestation of injustice made him unjust. He was the son of a Dublin attorney, came early to England to study law, but commenced his career as a miscellaneous writer in magazines. He was the founder and first author of the "Annual Register," a useful epitome of political and general facts, and gained his first reputation by his "Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful," a short treatise in which ingenuity is more perceptible than solidity of reasoning, and he became one of the most constant and brilliant ornaments of the club where Johnson, Reynolds, and Goldsmith used to assemble. Burke's powers of conversation were most extraordinary; his immense and varied stores of knowledge were poured forth in language unequalled for its splendor of illustration; and Johnson, jealous as he was of his own social supremacy, confessed that in Burke he encountered a fully equal antagonist. "On Taste" was written as an introductory essay to Burke's "Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful."

ON TASTE

ON a superficial view we may seem to differ very widely from each other in our reasonings, and no less in our pleasures: but, notwithstanding this difference, which I think to be rather apparent than real, it is probable that the standard both of reason and taste is the same in all human creatures; for, if there were not some principles of judgment as well as of sentiment common to all mankind, no hold could possibly be taken either on their reason or their passions sufficient to maintain the ordinary correspondence of life. It appears, indeed, to be generally acknowledged, that with regard to truth and falsehood there is something fixed. We find people in their disputes continually appealing to certain tests and standards, which are allowed on all sides, and are supposed to be established in our common nature. But there is not the same obvious concurrence in any uniform or settled principles which relate to taste. It is even commonly supposed that this delicate and aërial faculty, which seems too volatile to endure even the chains of a definition, cannot be properly tried by any test, nor regulated by any standard. There is so continual a call for the exercise of the reasoning faculty, and it is so much strengthened by perpetual contention, that certain maxims of right reason seem to be tacitly settled amongst the most ignorant. The learned have improved on this rude science, and reduced those maxims into a system. If taste had not been so happily cultivated, it was not that the subject was barren, but that the laborers were few or negligent; for, to say the truth, there are not the same interesting motives to impel us to fix the one which urge us to ascertain the other. And, after all, if men differ in their opinion concerning such matters their difference is not attended with the same important consequences; else I make no doubt but that the logic of taste, if I may be allowed the expression, might very possibly

be as well digested, and we might come to discuss matters of this nature with as much certainty as those which seem more immediately within the province of mere reason. And indeed it is very necessary, at the entrance into such an inquiry as our present, to make this point as clear as possible; for if taste has no fixed principles, if the imagination is not affected according to some invariable and certain laws, our labor is like to be employed to very little purpose; as it must be judged a useless, if not an absurd, undertaking, to lay down rules for caprice, and to set up for a legislator of whims and fancies.

The term taste, like all other figurative terms, is not extremely accurate: the thing which we understand by it is far from a simple and determinate idea in the minds of most men, and it is therefore liable to uncertainty and confusion. I have no great opinion of a definition, the celebrated remedy for the cure of this disorder. For, when we define, we seem in danger of circumscribing nature within the bounds of our own notions, which we often take up by hazard, or embrace on trust, or form out of a limited and partial consideration of the object before us, instead of extending our ideas to take in all that nature comprehends, according to her manner of combining. We are limited in our inquiry by the strict laws to which we have submitted at our setting out.

"Circa vilem patulumque morabimur orbem,
Unde pudor proferre pedem vetat aut operis lex."

A definition may be very exact, and yet go but a very little way towards informing us of the nature of the thing defined; but let the virtue of a definition be what it will, in the order of things, it seems rather to follow than to precede our inquiry, of which it ought to be considered as the result. It must be acknowledged that the methods of disquisition and teaching may be sometimes different, and on very good reason undoubtedly; but, for my part, I am convinced that the method of teaching which approaches most nearly to the method of investigation is incomparably the best; since, not content with serving up a few barren and lifeless truths, it leads to the stock on which they grew; it tends to set the reader himself in the track of invention, and to direct him into those paths

in which the author has made his own discoveries, if he should be so happy as to have made any that are valuable.

But, to cut off all pretence for cavilling, I mean by the word taste no more than that faculty or those faculties of the mind which are affected with, or which form a judgment of, the works of imagination and the elegant arts. This is, I think, the most general idea of that word, and what is the least connected with any particular theory. And my point, in this inquiry, is to find whether there are any principles, on which the imagination is affected, so common to all, so grounded and certain, as to supply the means of reasoning satisfactorily about them. And such principles of taste I fancy there are, however paradoxical it may seem to those who, on a superficial view, imagine that there is so great a diversity of tastes, both in kind and degree, that nothing can be more indeterminate.

All the natural powers in man, which I know, that are conversant about external objects, are the senses, the imagination, and the judgment. And, first, with regard to the senses. We do, and we must, suppose, that, as the conformation of their organs is nearly or altogether the same in all men, so the manner of perceiving external objects is in all men the same, or with little difference. We are satisfied that what appears to be light to one eye appears light to another; that what seems sweet to one palate is sweet to another; that what is dark and bitter to this man is likewise dark and bitter to that: and we conclude in the same manner of great and little, hard and soft, hot and cold, rough and smooth, and indeed of all the natural qualities and affections of bodies. If we suffer ourselves to imagine that their senses present to different men different images of things, this sceptical proceeding will make every sort of reasoning, on every subject, vain and frivolous, even that sceptical reasoning itself which had persuaded us to entertain a doubt concerning the agreement of our perceptions. But, as there will be little doubt that bodies present similar images to the whole species, it must necessarily be allowed that the pleasures and the pains which every object excites in one man, it must raise in all mankind, whilst it operates naturally, simply, and by its proper powers only; for, if we deny this, we must imagine that the same cause, operating in the same manner, and on subjects of the same kind, will produce differ-

ent effects, which would be highly absurd. Let us first consider this point in the sense of taste, and the rather as the faculty in question has taken its name from that sense. All men are agreed to call vinegar sour, honey sweet, and aloes bitter: and as they are all agreed in finding these qualities in those objects, they do not in the least differ concerning their effects with regard to pleasure and pain. They all concur in calling sweetness pleasant, and sourness and bitterness unpleasant. Here there is no diversity in their sentiments; and that there is not appears fully from the consent of all men in the metaphors which are taken from the sense of taste. A sour temper, bitter expressions, bitter curses, a bitter fate, are terms well and strongly understood by all. And we are altogether as well understood when we say a sweet disposition, a sweet person, a sweet condition, and the like. It is confessed that custom and some other causes have made many deviations from the natural pleasures or pains which belong to these several tastes; but then the power of distinguishing between the natural and the acquired relish remains to the very last. A man frequently comes to prefer the taste of tobacco to that of sugar, and the flavor of vinegar to that of milk; but this makes no confusion in tastes, whilst he is sensible that the tobacco and vinegar are not sweet, and whilst he knows that habit alone has reconciled his palate to these alien pleasures. Even with such a person we may speak, and with sufficient precision, concerning tastes. But should any man be found who declares that to him tobacco has a taste like sugar, and that he cannot distinguish between milk and vinegar; or that tobacco and vinegar are sweet, milk bitter, and sugar sour; we immediately conclude that the organs of this man are out of order, and that his palate is utterly vitiated. We are as far from conferring with such a person upon tastes as from reasoning concerning the relations of quantity with one who should deny that all the parts together were equal to the whole. We do not call a man of this kind wrong in his notions, but absolutely mad. Exceptions of this sort, in either way, do not at all impeach our general rule, nor make us conclude that men have various principles concerning the relations of quantity, or the taste of things. So that when it is said taste cannot be disputed, it can only mean, that no one can strictly

answer what pleasure or pain some particular man may find from the taste of some particular thing. This, indeed, cannot be disputed; but we may dispute, and with sufficient clearness too, concerning the things which are naturally pleasing or disagreeable to the sense. But when we talk of any peculiar or acquired relish, then we must know the habits, the prejudices, or the distempers of this particular man, and we must draw our conclusion from those.

This agreement of mankind is not confined to the taste solely. The principle of pleasure derived from sight is the same in all. Light is more pleasing than darkness. Summer, when the earth is clad in green, when the heavens are serene and bright, is more agreeable than winter, when everything makes a different appearance. I never remember that anything beautiful, whether a man, a beast, a bird, or a plant, was ever shown, though it were to an hundred people, that they did not all immediately agree that it was beautiful, though some might have thought that it fell short of their expectation, or that other things were still finer. I believe no man thinks a goose to be more beautiful than a swan, or imagines that what they call a Friesland hen excels a peacock. It must be observed, too, that the pleasures of the sight are not near so complicated and confused and altered by unnatural habits and associations, as the pleasures of the taste are; because the pleasures of the sight more commonly acquiesce in themselves, and are not so often altered by considerations which are independent of the sight itself. But things do not spontaneously present themselves to the palate as they do to the sight: they are generally applied to it, either as food or as medicine; and, from the qualities which they possess for nutritive or medicinal purposes, they often form the palate by degrees, and by force of these associations. Thus, opium is pleasing to Turks on account of the agreeable delirium it produces. Tobacco is the delight of Dutchmen; as it diffuses a torpor and pleasing stupefaction. Fermented spirits please our common people, because they banish care, and all considerations of future or present evils. All of these would lie absolutely neglected if their properties had originally gone no further than the taste; but all these, together with tea and coffee, and some other things, have passed from the apothecary's shop to our tables,

and were taken for health long before they were thought of for pleasure. The effect of the drug has made us use it frequently; and frequent use, combined with the agreeable effect, has made the taste itself at last agreeable. But this does not in the least perplex our reasoning; because we distinguish to the last the acquired from the natural relish. In describing the taste of an unknown fruit, you would scarcely say that it had a sweet and pleasant flavor like tobacco, opium, or garlic, although you spoke to those who were in the constant use of these drugs, and had great pleasure in them. There is in all men a sufficient remembrance of the original natural causes of pleasure, to enable them to bring all things offered to their senses to that standard, and to regulate their feelings and opinions by it. Suppose one who had so vitiated his palate as to take more pleasure in the taste of opium than in that of butter or honey, to be presented with a bolus of squills; there is hardly any doubt but that he would prefer the butter or honey to this nauseous morsel, or to any other bitter drug to which he had not been accustomed; which proves that his palate was naturally like that of other men in all things, that it is still like the palate of other men in many things, and only vitiated in some particular points. For, in judging of any new thing, even of a taste similar to that which he has been formed by habit to like, he finds his palate affected in the natural manner, and on the common principles. Thus the pleasure of all the senses, of the sight, and even of the taste, that most ambiguous of the senses, is the same in all, high and low, learned and unlearned.

Besides the ideas, with their annexed pains and pleasures, which are presented by the sense, the mind of man possesses a sort of creative power of its own; either in representing at pleasure the images of things in the order and manner in which they were received by the senses, or in combining those images in a new manner, and according to a different order. This power is called imagination: and to this belongs whatever is called wit, fancy, invention, and the like. But it must be observed that the power of the imagination is incapable of producing anything absolutely new: it can only vary the disposition of those ideas which it has received from the senses. Now, the imagination is the most extensive province of pleas-

ure and pain, as it is the region of our fears and our hopes, and of all our passions that are connected with them; and whatever is calculated to affect the imagination with these commanding ideas, by force of any original natural impression, must have the same power, pretty equally, over all men. For, since the imagination is only the representation of the senses, it can only be pleased or displeased with the images, from the same principle on which the senses are pleased or displeased with the realities; and consequently there must be just as close an agreement in the imaginations as in the senses of men. A little attention will convince us that this must of necessity be the case.

But, in the imagination, besides the pain or pleasure arising from the properties of the natural object, a pleasure is perceived from the resemblance which the imitation has to the original: the imagination, I conceive, can have no pleasure but what results from one or other of these causes. And these causes operate pretty uniformly upon all men, because they operate by principles in nature, and which are not derived from any particular habits or advantage. Mr. Locke very justly and finely observes of wit that it is chiefly conversant in tracing resemblances: he remarks, at the same time, that the business of judgment is rather in finding differences. It may, perhaps, appear, on this supposition, that there is no material distinction between the wit and the judgment, as they both seem to result from different operations of the same faculty of comparing. But, in reality, whether they are or are not dependent on the same power of the mind, they differ so very materially in many respects that a perfect union of wit and judgment is one of the rarest things in the world. When two distinct objects are unlike to each other, it is only what we expect; things are in their common way; and therefore they make no impression on the imagination: but when two distinct objects have a resemblance, we are struck, we attend to them, and we are pleased. The mind of man has naturally a far greater alacrity and satisfaction in tracing resemblances than in searching for differences: because, by making resemblances we produce new images; we unite, we create, we enlarge our stock: but in making distinctions we offer no food at all to the imagination; the task itself is more severe and

irksome, and what pleasure we derive from it is something of a negative and indirect nature. A piece of news is told me in the morning; this, merely as a piece of news, as a fact added to my stock, gives me some pleasure. In the evening, I find there was nothing in it. What do I gain by this but the dissatisfaction to find that I had been imposed upon? Hence it is that men are much more naturally inclined to belief than to incredulity. And it is upon this principle that the most ignorant and barbarous nations have frequently excelled in similitude, comparisons, metaphors, and allegories, who have been weak and backward in distinguishing and sorting their ideas. And it is for a reason of this kind that Homer and the Oriental writers, though very fond of similitudes, and though they often strike out such as are truly admirable, they seldom take care to have them exact; that is, they are taken with the general resemblance, they paint it strongly, and they take no notice of the difference which may be found between the things compared.

Now, as the pleasure of resemblance is that which principally flatters the imagination, all men are nearly equal in this point, as far as their knowledge of the things represented or compared extends. The principle of this knowledge is very much accidental; as it depends upon experience and observation, and not on the strength or weakness of any natural faculty; and it is from this difference in knowledge that what we commonly, though with no great exactness, call a difference in taste, proceeds. A man to whom sculpture is new sees a barber's block, or some ordinary piece of statuary: he is immediately struck and pleased, because he sees something like a human figure; and, entirely taken up with this likeness, he does not at all attend to its defects. No person, I believe, at the first time of seeing a piece of imitation, ever did. Some time after, we suppose that this novice lights upon a more artificial work of the same nature; he now begins to look with contempt on what he admired at first: not that he admired it even then for its unlikeness to a man; but for that general, though inaccurate, resemblance which it bore to the human figure. What he admired, at different times, in these so different figures, is strictly the same; and, though his knowledge is improved, his taste is not altered. Hitherto his mistake

was from a want of knowledge in art, and this arose from his inexperience; but he may be still deficient from a want of knowledge in nature. For it is possible that the man in question may stop here, and that the masterpiece of a great hand may please him no more than the middling performance of a vulgar artist; and this not for want of better or higher relish, but because all men do not observe with sufficient accuracy on the human figure, to enable them to judge properly of an imitation of it. And that the critical taste does not depend upon a superior principle in men, but upon superior knowledge, may appear from several instances. The story of the ancient painter and the shoemaker is very well known. The shoemaker set the painter right, with regard to some mistakes he had made in the shoe of one of his figures, and which the painter, who had not made such accurate observations on shoes, and was content with a general resemblance, had never observed. But this was no impeachment to the taste of the painter: it only showed some want of knowledge in the art of making shoes. Let us imagine that an anatomist had come into the painter's working-room: his piece is in general well done; the figure in question in a good attitude, and the parts well adjusted to their various movements: yet, the anatomist, critical in his art, may observe the swell of some muscle not quite just in the peculiar action of the figure. Here the anatomist observes what the painter had not observed; and he passes by what the shoemaker had remarked. But a want of the last critical knowledge in anatomy no more reflected on the natural good taste of the painter, or of any common observer of his piece, than the want of an exact knowledge in the formation of a shoe. A fine piece of a decollated head of St. John the Baptist was shown to a Turkish emperor: he praised many things; but he observed one defect: he observed that the skin did not shrink from the wounded part of the neck. The sultan on this occasion, though his observation was very just, discovered no more natural taste than the painter who executed this piece, or than a thousand European connoisseurs, who probably never would have made the same observation. His Turkish majesty had, indeed, been well acquainted with that terrible spectacle, which the others could only have represented in their imagination. On the subject of their dislike there is

a difference between all these people, arising from the different kinds and degrees of their knowledge; but there is something in common to the painter, the shoemaker, the anatomist, and the Turkish emperor: the pleasure arising from a natural object, so far as each perceives it justly imitated; the satisfaction in seeing an agreeable figure; the sympathy proceeding from a striking and affecting incident. So far as taste is natural, it is nearly common to all.

ON CONVERSATION

—

BY

WILLIAM COWPER

WILLIAM COWPER

1731—1800

William Cowper was born in 1731. The death of his mother when he was only six years old deprived him of the care which was needed for the well-being of a delicate and sensitive child; his recollections of this early sorrow are commemorated in one of the most beautiful of his minor poems. He was sent after her death to a private school at Market Street, whence he was removed at the end of two years because of an affection of his sight. At ten years of age he was sent to Westminster, where he continued until he was eighteen. Though he excelled in some youthful sports, and was therefore likely to have been popular with his companions, he appears to have suffered much both at Market Street and at Westminster from the tyranny of his school-fellows, and ever after retained the strongest aversion to any but home education. On leaving Westminster he was articled for three years to a solicitor—his fellow-pupil in the office being the future Lord Thurloe. In 1754 he was called to the bar, and resided in the Temple for eleven years. During those years Cowper mixed in the literary society of the day, and had considerable success both as a wit and as the author of various fugitive pieces. Several lucrative offices were obtained for him by the interest of friends, but each one of these in succession was found to require some public appearance, for which his nervous temperament disqualified him. In his last attempt to face an ordeal of the kind he broke down, became insane, and was placed in confinement for eighteen months. He now withdrew from London, and settled at Huntingdon, where he became the friend and soon the inmate of the family of the Unwins, with whom, there and at Olney, and afterwards at Weston, he found a home for the remainder of his days. Cowper suffered through life from the nervous melancholy which so often defeated his purposes in youth, and which at times amounted to insanity. He died in 1800.

Cowper was the author of "Table Talk," "Expostulation," "The Task," and other poems, besides hymns contributed to the Olney collection, and translations of the "Iliad" and "Odyssey." His prose writings consist chiefly of letters written to various friends, to whom he was deeply attached. He lived in extreme retirement in the bosom of the religious family with whom, as has been already said, he had made his home, and his letters touch upon such subjects as naturally belong to a quiet and contemplative life; they abound in religious meditations, in descriptions of domestic scenes, and in disclosures of his own feelings and states of mind, besides occasional allusions to his own peculiar trials. Political reflections occasionally occur, given with the modesty of a secluded observer.

Cowper's claim to rank as an essayist rests on his contributions to the "Connoisseur," a weekly miscellany commenced by George Colman and Bonnel Thornton in 1754. How easily he might have excelled in this kind of writing may be seen from his essay "On Conversation."

ON CONVERSATION

Servata semper lege et ratione loquendi.—Horace.

Your talk to decency and reason suit,
Nor prate like fools or gabble like a brute.

IN the comedy of the "Frenchman in London," which we were told was acted at Paris with universal applause for several nights together, there is a character of a rough Englishman, who is represented as quite unskilled in the graces of conversation; and his dialogue consists almost entirely of a repetition of the common salutation of "How do you do?" Our nation has, indeed, been generally supposed to be of a sullen and uncommunicative disposition; while, on the other hand, the loquacious French have been allowed to possess the art of conversing beyond all other people. The Englishman requires to be wound up frequently, and stops as soon as he is down; but the Frenchman runs on in a continual alarum. Yet it must be acknowledged that as the English consist of very different humors, their manner of discourse admits of great variety; but the whole French nation converse alike; and there is no difference in address between a marquis and a *valet-de-chambre*. We may frequently see a couple of French barbers accosting each other in the street, and paying their compliments with the same volubility of speech, the same grimace and action, as two courtiers in the Tuileries.

I shall not attempt to lay down any particular rules for conversation, but rather point out such faults in discourse and behavior as render the company of half mankind rather tedious than amusing. It is in vain, indeed, to look for conversation where we might expect to find it in the greatest perfection, among persons of fashion; there it is almost annihilated by universal card-playing: insomuch that I have heard it given as a reason why it is impossible for our present writers to succeed in the dialogue of genteel comedy, that our people of

quality scarce ever meet but to game. All their discourse turns upon the odd trick and the four honors; and it is no less a maxim with the votaries of whist than with those of Bacchus, that talking spoils company.

Everyone endeavors to make himself as agreeable to society as he can; but it often happens that those who most aim at shining in conversation overshoot their mark. Though a man succeeds, he should not (as is frequently the case) engross the whole talk to himself; for that destroys the very essence of conversation, which is talking together. We should try to keep up conversation like a ball bandied to and fro from one to the other, rather than seize it all to ourselves, and drive it before us like a football. We should likewise be cautious to adapt the matter of our discourse to our company, and not talk Greek before ladies, or of the last new furbelow to a meeting of country justices.

But nothing throws a more ridiculous air over our whole conversation than certain peculiarities easily acquired, but very difficultly conquered and discarded. In order to display these absurdities in a truer light, it is my present purpose to enumerate such of them as are most commonly to be met with; and first to take notice of those buffoons in society, the Attitudinarians and Face-makers. These accompany every word with a peculiar grimace or gesture; they assent with a shrug, and contradict with a twisting of the neck; are angry by a wry mouth, and pleased in a caper or minuet step. They may be considered as speaking harlequins; and their rules of eloquence are taken from the posture-master. These should be condemned to converse only in dumb show with their own persons in the looking-glass; as well as the Smirkers and Smilers, who so prettily set off their faces, together with their words, by a *je-ne-sais-quoi* between a grin and a dimple. With these we may likewise rank the affected tribe of mimics, who are constantly taking off the peculiar tone of voice or gesture of their acquaintance, though they are such wretched imitators, that (like bad painters) they are frequently forced to write the name under the picture before we can discover any likeness.

Next to these whose elocution is absorbed in action, and who converse chiefly with their arms and legs, we may consider the Professed Speakers. And first, the Emphatical, who squeeze, and press, and ram down every syllable with excessive vehe-

mence and energy. These orators are remarkable for their distinct elocution and force of expression: they dwell on the important particles *of* and *the*, and the significant conjunction *and*, which they seem to hawk up, with much difficulty, out of their own throats, and to cram them, with no less pain, into the ears of their auditors. These should be suffered only to syringe (as it were) the ears of a deaf man, through a hearing-trumpet; though I must confess that I am equally offended with the Whisperers or Low-speakers, who seem to fancy all their acquaintance deaf, and come up so close to you that they may be said to measure noses with you, and frequently overcome you with the full exhalations of a foul breath. I would have these oracular gentry obliged to speak at a distance through a speaking-trumpet, or apply their lips to the walls of a whispering-gallery. The Wits, who will not condescend to utter anything but a *bon-mot*, and the Whistlers or Tune-hummers, who never articulate at all, may be joined very agreeably together in concert; and to these tinkling cymbals I would also add the sounding brass, the Bawler, who inquires after your health with the bellowing of a town-crier.

The Tattlers, whose pliable pipes are admirably adapted to the "soft parts of conversation," and sweetly "prattling out of fashion," make very pretty music from a beautiful face and a female tongue; but from a rough manly voice and coarse features mere nonsense is as harsh and dissonant as a jig from a hurdy-gurdy. The Swearers I have spoken of in a former paper; but the Half-Swearers, who split, and mince, and fritter their oaths into "gad's bud," "od's fish," and "demme," the Gothic Humbuggers, and those who nickname God's creatures, and call a man a cabbage, a crab, a queer cub, an odd fish, and an unaccountable muskin, should never come into company without an interpreter. But I will not tire my reader's patience by pointing out all the pests of conversation; nor dwell particularly on the Sensibles, who pronounce dogmatically on the most trivial points, and speak in sentences; the Wonderers, who are always wondering what o'clock it is, or wondering whether it will rain or no, or wondering when the moon changes; the Phraseologists, who explain a thing by all that, or enter into particulars, with this and that and t'other; and lastly, the Silent Men, who seem afraid of opening their mouths lest they should catch cold, and literally observe the precept of the

gospel, by letting their conversation be only yea yea, and nay nay.

The rational intercourse kept up by conversation is one of our principal distinctions from brutes. We should therefore endeavor to turn this peculiar talent to our advantage, and consider the organs of speech as the instruments of understanding: we should be very careful not to use them as the weapons of vice, or tools of folly, and do our utmost to unlearn any trivial or ridiculous habits, which tend to lessen the value of such an inestimable prerogative. It is, indeed, imagined by some philosophers, that even birds and beasts (though without the power of articulation) perfectly understand one another by the sounds they utter; and that dogs, cats, etc., have each a particular language to themselves, like different nations. Thus it may be supposed that the nightingales of Italy have as fine an ear for their own native woodnotes as any signor or signora for an Italian air; that the boars of Westphalia gruntle as expressively through the nose as the inhabitants in High German; and that the frogs in the dykes of Holland croak as intelligibly as the natives jabber their Low Dutch. However this may be, we may consider those whose tongues hardly seem to be under the influence of reason, and do not keep up the proper conversation of human creatures, as imitating the language of different animals. Thus, for instance, the affinity between Chatterers and Monkeys, and Praters and Parrots, is too obvious not to occur at once; Grunters and Growlers may be justly compared to Hogs; Snarlers are Curs that continually show their teeth, but never bite; and the Spitfire passionate are a sort of wild cats that will not bear stroking, but will purr when they are pleased. Complainers are Screech-Owls; and Story-tellers, always repeating the same dull note, are Cuckoos. Poets that prick up their ears at their own hideous braying are no better than Asses. Critics in general are venomous Serpents that delight in hissing, and some of them who have got by heart a few technical terms without knowing their meaning are no other than Magpies. I myself, who have crowed to the whole town for near three years past, may perhaps put my readers in mind of a Barnyard Cock; but as I must acquaint them that they will hear the last of me on this day fortnight, I hope they will then consider me as a Swan, who is supposed to sing sweetly at his dying moments.

THE OCEAN OF INK

—

BY

GEORGE COLMAN

AND

BONNEL THORNTON

GEORGE COLMAN

1733—1794

George Colman, a dramatic writer and accomplished scholar, was born at Florence, in 1733, where his father at that time resided as the British envoy. After receiving his education at Westminster School and at Christ Church, Oxford, he turned his attention to the law as a profession; but his writings in "The Connoisseur" having met with success, gave him a bias towards polite literature, and he accordingly abandoned the graver pursuits of legal science. His first dramatic attempt was "Polly Honeycombe," which was performed at Drury Lane with great, though only temporary, success. In the following year, 1761, he produced his comedy of the "Jealous Wife," which at once became popular and has ever since kept the stage. "The Clandestine Marriage," "The English Merchant," etc., added to his fame; and he wrote a number of other pieces, which, though inferior to these, were by no means deficient in merit. Lord Bath and General Pulteney, at their deaths, left him considerable legacies, which enabled him to purchase a share in Covent Garden Theatre. Disputes arising between himself and the other proprietors, he very soon disposed of this property, and purchased the little theatre in the Haymarket, which he conducted until an attack of paralysis reduced him to a state of mental imbecility. In addition to his writings mentioned above, he translated the comedies of Terence, and Horace's "De Arte Poetica." He died in 1794.

BONNEL THORNTON

1724—1768

Bonnel Thornton, a humorous writer and poet, was born in London, in 1724, and was educated at Westminster School and Christ Church, Oxford. He made literature his profession, and was on terms of intimacy with many of the wits of the age, united with the elder Colman in "The Connoisseur," and was a fertile contributor to the periodicals of the day. He projected an exhibition of sign paintings; and brought out a burlesque "Ode for St. Cecilia's Day," which afforded much amusement. In 1766 he published a translation of Plautus; and the year following a poem, entitled "The Battle of the Wigs," in ridicule of the dispute between the licentiates and fellows of the College of Physicians. He died in 1768.

"The Ocean of Ink" is taken from "The Connoisseur." Colman and Thornton, according to their own statement, collaborated in every essay, and wrote in such unison that almost every single paper is the joint product of both. "The Connoisseur" lasted from January, 1754, to September, 1756, and was succeeded by Johnson's "Idler."

THE OCEAN OF INK

Suave mari magno, turbantibus æquora ventis,
E terra magnum alterius spectare laborem.—Lucretius.

When raging winds the ruffled deep deform,
We look at distance, and enjoy the storm;
Toss'd on the waves with pleasure others see,
Nor heed their dangers, while ourselves are free.

WE writers of essays, or (as they are termed) periodical papers, justly claim to ourselves a place among the modern improvers of literature. Neither Bentley nor Burman,[1] nor any other equally sagacious commentator, has been able to discover the least traces of any similar productions among the ancients: except we can suppose that the history of Thucydides was retailed weekly in sixpenny numbers; that Seneca dealt out his morality every Saturday, or that Tully wrote speeches and philosophical disquisitions, whilst Virgil and Horace clubbed together to furnish the poetry for a Roman magazine.

There is a word, indeed, by which we are fond of distinguishing our works, and for which we must confess ourselves indebted to the Latin. Myself, and every petty journalist, affect to dignify our hasty performances by styling them "lucubrations"; by which we mean, if we mean anything, that as the day is too short for our labors, we are obliged to call in the assistance of the night: not to mention the modest insinuation that our compositions are so correct, that (like the orations of Demosthenes) they may be said to smell of the lamp. We would be understood to follow the directions of the Roman satirist, "to grow pale by the midnight candle"; though, perhaps, as our own satirist[2] expresses it, we may be thought

"Sleepless ourselves, to give our readers sleep."

[1] Peter Burman (d. 1741), an eminent classical commentator, and professor at Leyden.

[2] Pope, "Dunciad," i. 94.

But as a relief from the fatigue of so many restless hours, we have frequently gone to sleep for the benefit of the public: and surely we, whose labors are confined to a sheet and a half, may be indulged in taking a nap now and then, as well as those engaged in longer works; who (according to Horace) are to be excused if a little drowsiness sometimes creeps in upon them.

After this preface, the reader will not be surprised, if I take the liberty to relate a dream of my own. It is usual on these occasions to be lulled to sleep by some book: and most of my brethren pay that compliment to Virgil or Shakespeare: but as I could never discover any opiate qualities in those authors, I chose rather to doze over some modern performance. I must beg to be excused from mentioning particulars, as I would not provoke the resentment of my contemporaries: nobody will imagine that I dipped into any of our modern novels, or took up any of our late tragedies. Let it suffice that I presently fell fast asleep.

I found myself transported in an instant to the shore of an immense sea, covered with innumerable vessels; and though many of them suddenly disappeared every minute, I saw others continually launching forth, and pursuing the same course. The seers of visions and dreamers of dreams have their organs of sight so considerably improved, that they can take in any object, however distant or minute. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that I could discern everything distinctly, though the waters before me were of the deepest black.

While I stood contemplating this amazing scene, one of those good-natured Genii, who never fail making their appearance to extricate dreamers from their difficulties, rose from the sable stream and planted himself at my elbow. His complexion was of the darkest hue, not unlike that of the demons of a printing-house; his jetty beard shone like the bristles of a blacking-brush; on his head he wore a turban of imperial paper; and there hung a calfskin on his reverend limbs, which was gilt on the back, and faced with robings of morocco, lettered (like a rubric-post) with the names of the most eminent authors. In his left hand he bore a printed scroll, which from the marginal corrections I imagined to be a proof-sheet; and in his right hand he waved the quill of a goose.

He immediately accosted me. "Town,"[3] said he, "I am the Genius who is destined to conduct you through these turbulent waves. The sea that you now behold is the Ocean of Ink. Those towers, at a great distance, whose bases are founded upon rocks, and whose tops seem lost in the clouds, are situated in the Isle of Fame. Contiguous to these, you may discern by the glittering of its golden sands, is the Coast of Gain, which leads to a fertile and rich country. All the vessels which are yonder sailing with a fair wind on the main sea are making towards one or other of these; but you will observe that on the first setting out they were irresistibly drawn into the eddies of Criticism, where they were obliged to encounter the most dreadful tempests and hurricanes. In these dangerous straits you see with what violence every bark is tossed up and down; some go to the bottom at once; others, after a faint struggle, are beat to pieces; many are much damaged; while a few, by sound planks and tight rigging, are enabled to weather the storm."

At this sight I started back with horror; and the remembrance still dwells so strong upon my fancy, that I even now imagine the torrent of criticism bursting in upon me, and ready to overwhelm me in an instant.

"Cast a look," resumed my instructor, "on that vast lake divided into two parts, which lead to yonder magnificent structures, erected by the Tragic and Comic Muse. There you may observe many trying to force a passage without chart or compass. Some have been overset by crowding too much sail, and others have foundered by carrying too much ballast. An Arcadian vessel[4] (the master an Irishman) was, through contrary squalls, scarce able to live nine days; but you see that light Italian gondola, *Gli Amanti Gelosi,* skims along pleasantly before the wind, and outstrips the painted frigates of our country, Didone and Artaserse. Observe that triumphant squadron, to whose flag all the others pay homage. Most of them are ships of the first-rate, and were fitted out many years ago. Though somewhat irregular in their make, and but little conformable to the exact rules of art, they will ever continue

[3] The pseudonym used by the joint editors, Colman and Thornton.

[4] The vessel is a tragedy, "Philoclea," based on Sidney's "Arcadia"; the gondola refers to an Italian burlesque, and the frigates to two Italian operas (Harrison).

the pride and glory of these seas; for, as it is remarked by the present Laureate,[5] in his prologue to Papal Tyranny,

> "Shakespeare, whose art no playwright can excel,
> Has launch'd us fleets of plays, and built them well."

The Genius then bade me turn my eye where the water seemed to foam with perpetual agitation. "That," said he, "is the strong current of Politics, often fatal to those who venture on it." I could not but take notice of a poor wretch on the opposite shore, fastened by the ears to a terrible machine. This, the Genius informed me, was the memorable Defoe, set up there as a landmark, to prevent future mariners from splitting on the same rock. To this turbulent prospect succeeded objects of a more placid nature. In a little creek, winding through flowery meads and shady groves, I descried several gilded yachts and pleasure boats, all of them keeping due time with their silver oars, and gliding along the smooth, even, calm, regularly flowing rivulets of Rhyme. Shepherds and shepherdesses played on the banks; the sails were gently swelled with the soft breezes of amorous sighs; and little Loves sported in the silken cordage.

My attention was now called off from these pacific scenes to an obstinate engagement between several ships, distinguished from all others by bearing the Holy Cross for their colors. These, the Genius told me, were employed in the Holy War of Religious Controversy; and he pointed out to me a few corsairs in the service of the infidels, sometimes aiding one party, sometimes siding with the other, as might best contribute to the general confusion. I observed in different parts of the ocean several galleys, which were rowed by slaves. "Those," said the Genius, "are fitted out by very oppressive owners, and are all of them bound to the Coast of Gain. The miserable wretches whom you see chained to the oars are obliged to tug without the least respite; and though the voyage should turn out successful, they have little or no share in the profits. Some few you may observe who rather choose to make a venture on their own bottoms. These work as hard as the galley-slaves, and are frequently cast away; but though they are never so often

[5] Colley Cibber.

wrecked, necessity still constrains them to put out to sea again—

> *"Reficit rates*
> *Quassas, indocilis pauperiem pati."—Horace.*
>
> Still must the wretch his shatter'd bark refit,
> For who to starve can patiently submit?

It were needless to enumerate many other particulars that engaged my notice. Among the rest was a large fleet of Annotators, Dutch-built, which sailed very heavy, were often aground, and continually ran foul of each other. The whole ocean, I also found, was infested by pirates, who ransacked every rich vessel that came in their way. Most of these were endeavoring to make the Coast of Gain, by hanging out false colors, or by forging their passports, and pretending to be freighted out by the most reputable traders.

My eyes were at last fixed, I know not how, on a spacious channel running through the midst of a great city. I felt such a secret impulse at this sight that I could not help inquiring particularly about it. "The discovery of that passage," said the Genius, "was first made by one Bickerstaff, in the good ship called 'The Tatler,' and who afterwards embarked in the 'Spectator' and 'Guardian.' These have been followed since by a number of little sloops, skiffs, hoys, and cock-boats, which have been most of them wrecked in the attempt. Thither also must your course be directed."—At this instant the Genius suddenly snatched me up in his arms, and plunged me headlong into the inky flood. While I lay gasping and struggling beneath the waves, methought I heard a familiar voice calling me by name, which awaking me, I with pleasure recollected the features of the Genius in those of my publisher, who was standing by my bedside, and had called upon me for copy.

EXTRAORDINARY ACCOUNT OF ROBERT BURNS, THE AYRSHIRE PLOUGHMAN

—

BY

HENRY MACKENZIE

HENRY MACKENZIE

1745—1831

Henry Mackenzie was born in Edinburgh, in August, 1745. His father, Dr. Joshua Mackenzie, was a physician in extensive practice. He was educated at the High School, and afterwards studied law. The department of law chosen by Mackenzie was the business of the Exchequer Court, to improve himself in which he went to London, in 1765, to study the English Exchequer practice. His earliest and most successful novel, "The Man of Feeling," was begun in London about this time, and afterwards published anonymously in 1771. His professional life in Edinburgh allowed him sufficient leisure to cultivate literature. Besides his other works he was the editor of two periodicals, the "Mirror" and the "Lounger." The "Mirror" continued to appear for seventeen months, from January, 1779; and the "Lounger," which was commenced in February, 1785, ceased publication about two years afterwards. One of the most notable of Mackenzie's contributions to these two periodicals is the kindly and well-timed criticism on Burns's works. He wrote some dramatic pieces, which were brought out at Edinburgh with but indifferent success. Mackenzie supported the government of Mr. Pitt with some pamphlets written with great acuteness and discrimination. In real life the novelist was shrewd and practical: he had early exhausted his vein of romance, and was an active man of business. In 1804 the government appointed him to the office of comptroller of taxes for Scotland, which entailed upon him considerable labor and drudgery, but was highly lucrative. In this situation, with a numerous family (he married Miss Penuel Grant—daughter of Sir Ludovic Grant, of Grant), enjoying the society of his friends and his favorite sports of the field, writing occasionally on subjects of taste and literature—for, he said, "the old stump would still occasionally send forth a few green shoots"—the author of "The Man of Feeling" lived to the advanced age of eighty-six.

EXTRAORDINARY ACCOUNT OF ROBERT BURNS, THE AYRSHIRE PLOUGHMAN

TO the feeling and the susceptible there is something wonderfully pleasing in the contemplation of genius, of that super-eminent reach of mind by which some men are distinguished.[1] In the view of highly superior talents, as in that of great and stupendous natural objects, there is a sublimity which fills the soul with wonder and delight, which expands it, as it were, beyond its usual bounds, and which, investing our nature with extraordinary powers and extraordinary honors, interests our curiosity, and flatters our pride.

This divinity of genius, however, which admiration is fond to worship, is best arrayed in the darkness of distant and remote periods, and is not easily acknowledged in the present times, or in places with which we are perfectly acquainted. Exclusive of all the deductions which envy or jealousy may sometimes be supposed to make, there is a familiarity in the near approach of persons around us, not very consistent with the lofty ideas which we wish to form of him, who has led captive our imagination in the triumph of his fancy, overpowered our feelings with the tide of passion, or enlightened our reason with the investigation of hidden truths. It may be true, that "in the olden time" genius had some advantages which tended to its vigor and its growth; but it is not unlikely, that, even in these degenerate days, it rises much oftener than it is observed; that

[1] The story of this notice, which helped to introduce, and finally settle, Burns' fame as a poet in public estimation, is thus told by Robert Chambers in his "Life and Works of Burns": "Professor Stewart, on leaving the banks of the Ayr at the beginning of November to commence his winter session at the university, carried with him a copy of the Kilmarnock volume, which he brought under the notice of Mr. Henry Mackenzie, the well-known author of the 'Man of Feeling,' and who was now conducting a periodical entitled the 'Lounger,' published in Edinburgh by Mr. Creech. Mr. Mackenzie read the poems with the usual admiration, and lost no time in writing upon them a generous critique, which appeared in the 'Lounger' for the 9th of December [1786]. By this alone the fame of Burns was perfected in Scotland; for, by the pronouncement of the greatest tribunal in the country, all lesser judges were set free to give their judgment in the direction which their feelings had already dictated."

in "the ignorant present time," our posterity may find names which they will dignify, though we neglected, and pay to their memory those honors which their contemporaries had denied them.

There is, however, a natural, and indeed a fortunate, vanity in trying to redress this wrong which genius is exposed to suffer. In the discovery of talents generally unknown, men are apt to indulge the same fond partiality as in all other discoveries which themselves have made; and hence we have had repeated instances of painters and of poets, who have been drawn from obscure situations, and held forth to public notice and applause by the extravagant encomiums of their introductors, yet in a short time have sunk again to their former obscurity; whose merit, though perhaps somewhat neglected, did not appear to have been much undervalued by the world, and could not support, by its own intrinsic excellence, that superior place which the enthusiasm of its patrons would have assigned it.

I know not if I shall be accused of such enthusiasm and partiality, when I introduce to the notice of my readers a poet of our own country, with whose writings I have lately become acquainted; but if I am not greatly deceived, I think I may safely pronounce him a genius of no ordinary rank. The person to whom I allude is Robert Burns, an Ayrshire ploughman, whose poems were some time ago published in a county town in the west of Scotland, with no other ambition, it would seem, than to circulate among the inhabitants of the county where he was born, to obtain a little fame from those who had heard of his talents. I hope I shall not be thought to assume too much, if I endeavor to place him in a higher point of view, to call for a verdict of his country on the merit of his works, and to claim for him those honors which their excellence appears to deserve.

In mentioning the circumstances of his humble station, I mean not to rest his pretensions solely on that title, or to urge the merits of his poetry when considered in relation to the lowness of his birth, and the little opportunity of improvement which his education could afford. These particulars, indeed, might excite our wonder at his productions; but his poetry, considered abstractedly, and with the apologies arising from his situation, seems to me fully entitled to command our feelings, and to obtain our applause. One bar, indeed, his birth and edu-

cation have opposed to his fame—the language in which most of his poems are written. Even in Scotland, the provincial dialect which Ramsay and he have used is now read with a difficulty which greatly damps the pleasure of the reader: in England it cannot be read at all, without such a constant reference to a glossary, as nearly to destroy that pleasure.

Some of his productions, however, especially those of the grave style, are almost English. From one of those I shall first present my readers with an extract, in which I think they will discover a high tone of feeling, a power and energy of expression, particularly and strongly characteristic of the mind and the voice of a poet. It is from his poem entitled "The Vision," in which the genius of his native county, Ayrshire, is thus supposed to address him:

"With future hope, I oft would gaze,
Fond, on thy little early ways,
Thy rudely carolled, chiming phrase,
In uncouth rhymes,
Fired at the simple, artless lays
Of other times.

"I saw thee seek the sounding shore,
Delighted with the dashing roar;
Or, when the North his fleecy store
Drove through the sky,
I saw grim Nature's visage hoar
Strike thy young eye.

"Or when the deep-green mantled earth,
Warm-cherished every floweret's birth,
And joy and music pouring forth
In every grove,
I saw thee eye the general mirth
With boundless love.

"When ripened fields and azure skies
Called forth the reapers' rustling noise,
I saw thee leave their evening joys,
And lonely stalk,
To vent thy bosom's swelling rise
In pensive walk.

"When youthful love, warm-blushing strong,
Keen-shivering, shot thy nerves along,

Those accents, grateful to thy tongue,
The adored name,
I taught thee how to pour in song,
To soothe thy flame.

"I saw thy pulse's maddening play,
Wild, send thee Pleasure's devious way,
Misled by Fancy's meteor-ray,
By Passion driven;
But yet the light that led astray
Was light from heaven."

Of strains like the above, solemn and sublime, with that rapt and inspired melancholy in which the poet lifts his eye "above this visible diurnal sphere," the poems entitled "Despondency," "The Lament," "Winter: a Dirge," and the "Invocation to Ruin" afford no less striking examples. Of the tender and the moral, specimens equally advantageous might be drawn from the elegiac verses, entitled, "Man was made to Mourn," from "The Cottar's Saturday Night," the stanzas "To a Mouse," or those "To a Mountain Daisy, on turning it down with the plough in April, 1786." This last poem I shall insert entire, not from its superior merit, but because its length suits the bounds of my paper:

"Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower,
Thou's met me in an evil hour,
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem;
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonnie gem.

"Alas! it's no thy neighbor sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet;
Bending thee 'mong the dewy weet
Wi' spreckled breast,
When upward-springing, blythe to greet
The purpling east.

"Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce reared above the parent-earth
Thy tender form.

"The flaunting flowers our gardens yield,
High-sheltering woods and wa's maun shield,
But thou beneath the random bield
Of clod or stane,
Adorns the histie stubble-field,
Unseen, alane.

"There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snowy bosom sunward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head,
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

"Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet floweret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betrayed,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soiled, is laid
Low in the dust.

"Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starred!
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er.

"Such fate to suffering worth is given,
Who long with wants and woes has striven,
By human pride or cunning driven
To misery's brink,
Till, wrenched of every stay but Heaven,
He ruined sink.

"Ev'n thou who mournst the daisy's fate,
That fate is thine——No distant date;
Stern Ruin's plough-share drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight,
Shall be thy doom."

I have seldom met with an image more truly pastoral than that of the lark, in the second stanza. Such strokes as these mark the pencil of the poet, which delineates nature with the precision of intimacy, yet with the delicate coloring of beauty and of taste.

The power of genius is not less admirable in tracing the manners, than in painting the passions, or in drawing the scenery of nature. That intuitive glance with which a writer like Shakespeare discerns the characters of men, with which he catches the many changing hues of life, forms a sort of problem in the science of mind, of which it is easier to see the truth than to assign the cause. Though I am very far from meaning to compare our rustic bard to Shakespeare, yet whoever will read his lighter and more humorous poems, his "Dialogue of the Dogs," his "Dedication to G—— H——, Esq.," his "Epistles to a Young Friend," and to "W. S——n," will perceive with what uncommon penetration and sagacity this heaven-taught ploughman, from his humble and unlettered station, has looked upon men and manners.

Against some passages of those last-mentioned poems it has been objected that they breathe a spirit of libertinism and irreligion. But if we consider the ignorance and fanaticism of the lower class of people in the country where these poems were written, a fanaticism of that pernicious sort which sets faith in opposition to good works, the fallacy and danger of which a mind so enlightened as our poet's could not but perceive; we shall not look upon his lighter muse as the enemy of religion (of which in several places he expresses the justest sentiments), though she has sometimes been a little unguarded in her ridicule of hypocrisy.

In this, as in other respects, it must be allowed, that there are exceptionable parts of the volume he has given to the public which caution would have suppressed, or correction struck out; but poets are seldom cautious, and our poet had, alas! no friends or companions from whom correction could be obtained. When we reflect on his rank in life, the habits to which he must have been subject, and the society in which he must have mixed, we regret perhaps more than wonder that delicacy should be so often offended in perusing a volume in which there is so much to interest and to please us.

Burns possesses the spirit as well as the fancy of a poet. That honest pride and independence of soul which are sometimes the muse's only dower break forth on every occasion in his works. It may be, then, I shall wrong his feelings, while I indulge my own, in calling the attention of the public to his

situation and circumstances. That condition, humble as it was, in which he found content, and wooed the muse, might not have been deemed uncomfortable; but grief and misfortunes have reached him there; and one or two of his poems hint, what I have learned from some of his countrymen, that he has been obliged to form the resolution of leaving his native land, to seek under a West Indian clime that shelter and support which Scotland has denied him. But I trust means may be found to prevent this resolution from taking place; and that I do my country no more than justice when I suppose her ready to stretch out her hand to cherish and retain this native poet, whose "woodnotes wild" possess so much excellence. To repair the wrongs of suffering or neglected merit; to call forth genius from the obscurity in which it had pined indignant, and place it where it may profit or delight the world; these are exertions which give to wealth an enviable superiority, to greatness and to patronage a laudable pride.

FALLACIES OF ANTI-REFORMERS

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BY

SYDNEY SMITH

SYDNEY SMITH

1771—1845

Sydney Smith was born at Woodford, near London, in the year 1771. He was educated at Winchester School and at New College, where he obtained a fellowship in 1790. He took orders, and settled in his first curacy in a remote village on Salisbury Plain. At the end of two years he resigned his charge in order to accompany the son of the squire of the parish to Weimar, where he was to reside for his education. The war of 1797 defeated this purpose, and tutor and scholar were driven to Edinburgh, where Sydney Smith remained for five years as minister of the Episcopal Church in that city. He became the intimate friend of Jeffrey, Murray, and Brougham, and in company with them commenced the "Edinburgh Review," of which he was the first editor as well as one of the founders. On his removal to London he continued to be one of its principal contributors, advocating in its pages the cause of progress in political matters, as well as in many questions now best known under the name of social science. In London he became both a popular preacher and also a successful lecturer at the Royal Institution. During the greater part of his life he was the friend of Lord Grey, Lord Holland, and the other leaders of the Whig party. He was made a Canon of Bristol in 1828, and of St. Paul's in 1831. He died in 1845.

"Fallacies of Anti-Reformers" is highly characteristic of Sydney Smith's style, displaying the fertility of his fancy and the richness of his humor, at the same time driving home his argument with irresistible effect. Like Swift, he seems never to have taken up his pen from the mere love of composition, but to enforce practical views and opinions on which he felt strongly. His wit and banter are equally direct and cogent. Though a professed joker and convivial wit—"a diner-out of the first lustre," as he has himself characterized Mr. Canning—there is not one of his humorous or witty sallies that does not seem to flow naturally, and without effort, as if struck out or remembered at the moment it is used. He was a fine representative of the intellectual Englishman—manly, fearless, and independent. His talents were always exercised on practical subjects; to correct what he deemed abuses, to enforce religious toleration, to expose cant and hypocrisy, and to inculcate timely reformation. No politician was ever more disinterested or effective. He had the wit and energy of Swift without his coarseness or cynicism, and if inferior to Swift in the high attribute of original inventive genius, he had a peculiar and inimitable breadth of humor and drollery of illustration that served as potent auxiliaries to his clear and logical argument.

FALLACIES OF ANTI-REFORMERS

The Book of Fallacies: from Unfinished Papers of Jeremy Bentham. By a Friend

THERE are a vast number of absurd and mischievous fallacies, which pass readily in the world for sense and virtue, while in truth they tend only to fortify error and encourage crime. Mr. Bentham has enumerated the most conspicuous of these in the book before us.

Whether it be necessary there should be a middleman between the cultivator and the possessor, learned economists have doubted; but neither gods, men, nor booksellers can doubt the necessity of a middleman between Mr. Bentham and the public. Mr. Bentham is long; Mr. Bentham is occasionally involved and obscure; Mr. Bentham invents new and alarming expressions; Mr. Bentham loves division and subdivision—and he loves method itself, more than its consequences. Those only, therefore, who know his originality, his knowledge, his vigor, and his boldness, will recur to the works themselves. The great mass of readers will not purchase improvement at so dear a rate; but will choose rather to become acquainted with Mr. Bentham through the medium of reviews—after that eminent philosopher has been washed, trimmed, shaved, and forced into clean linen. One great use of a review, indeed, is to make men wise in ten pages, who have no appetite for a hundred pages; to condense nourishment, to work with pulp and essence, and to guard the stomach from idle burden and unmeaning bulk. For half a page, sometimes for a whole page, Mr. Bentham writes with a power which few can equal; and by selecting and omitting, an admirable style may be formed from the text. Using this liberty, we shall endeavor to give an account of Mr. Bentham's doctrines, for the most part in his own words. Wherever an expression is particu-

larly happy, let it be considered to be Mr. Bentham's—the dulness we take to ourselves.

Our Wise Ancestors—*The Wisdom of Our Ancestors—The Wisdom of Ages—Venerable Antiquity—Wisdom of Old Times.*—This mischievous and absurd fallacy springs from the grossest perversion of the meaning of words. Experience is certainly the mother of wisdom, and the old have, of course, a greater experience than the young; but the question is who are the old? and who are the young? Of *individuals* living at the same period, the oldest has, of course, the greatest experience; but among *generations* of men the reverse of this is true. Those who come first (our ancestors) are the young people, and have the least experience. We have added to their experience the experience of many centuries; and, therefore, as far as experience goes, are wiser, and more capable of forming an opinion than they were. The real feeling should be, *not* can we be so presumptuous as to put our opinions in opposition to those of our ancestors? but can such young, ignorant, inexperienced persons as our ancestors necessarily were, be expected to have understood a subject as well as those who have seen so much more, lived so much longer, and enjoyed the experience of so many centuries? All this cant, then, about our ancestors is merely an abuse of words, by transferring phrases true of contemporary men to succeeding ages. Whereas (as we have before observed) of living men the oldest has, *cæteris paribus*, the most experience; of generations, the oldest has, *cæteris paribus*, the least experience. Our ancestors, up to the Conquest, were children in arms; chubby boys in the time of Edward I; striplings under Elizabeth; men in the reign of Queen Anne; and *we* only are the white-bearded, silver-headed ancients, who have treasured up, and are prepared to profit by, all the experience which human life can supply. We are not disputing with our ancestors the palm of talent, in which they may or may not be our superiors, but the palm of experience in which it is utterly impossible they can be our superiors. And yet, whenever the Chancellor comes forward to protect some abuse, or to oppose some plan which has the increase of human happiness for its object, his first appeal is always to the wisdom of our ancestors; and he himself, and many noble lords who vote with him, are, to this

hour, persuaded that all alterations and amendments on their devices are an unblushing controversy between youthful temerity and mature experience!—and so, in truth they are—only that much-loved magistrate mistakes the young for the old, and the old for the young—and is guilty of that very sin against experience which he attributes to the lovers of innovation.

We cannot of course be supposed to maintain that our ancestors wanted wisdom, or that they were necessarily mistaken in their institutions, because their means of information were more limited than ours. But we do confidently maintain that when we find it expedient to change anything which our ancestors have enacted, we are the experienced persons, and not they. The quantity of talent is always varying in any great nation. To say that we are more or less able than our ancestors is an assertion that requires to be explained. All the able men of all ages, who have ever lived in England, probably possessed, if taken altogether, more intellect than all the able men England can now boast of. But if authority must be resorted to rather than reason, the question is, What was the wisdom of that single age which enacted the law, compared with the wisdom of the age which proposes to alter it? What are the eminent men of one and the other period? If you say that our ancestors were wiser than us, mention your date and year. If the splendor of names is equal, are the circumstances the same? If the circumstances are the same, we have a superiority of experience, of which the difference between the two periods is the measure. It is necessary to insist upon this; for upon sacks of wool, and on benches forensic, sit grave men, and agricolous persons in the Commons, crying out: "Ancestors, ancestors! *hodie non!* Saxons, Danes, save us! Fiddlefrig, help us! Howel, Ethelwolf, protect us!" Any cover for nonsense—any veil for trash—any pretext for repelling the innovations of conscience and of duty!

"So long as they keep to vague generalities—so long as the two objects of comparison are each of them taken in the lump—wise ancestors in one lump, ignorant and foolish mob of modern times in the other—the weakness of the fallacy may escape detection. But let them assign for the period of superior wisdom any determinate period whatsoever, not only will the groundlessness of the notion be apparent (class being

compared with class in that period and the present one), but, unless the antecedent period be comparatively speaking a very modern one, so wide will be the disparity, and to such an amount in favor of modern times, that, in comparison of the lowest class of the people in modern times (always supposing them proficient in the art of reading, and their proficiency employed in the reading of newspapers), the very highest and best-informed class of these wise ancestors will turn out to be grossly ignorant.

" Take, for example, any year in the reign of Henry VIII, from 1509 to 1546. At that time the House of Lords would probably have been in possession of by far the larger proportion of what little instruction the age afforded; in the House of Lords, among the laity, it might even then be a question whether, without exception, their lordships were all of them able so much as to read. But even supposing them all in the fullest possession of that useful art, political science being the science in question, what instruction on the subject could they meet with at that time of day?

" On no one branch of legislation was any book extant from which, with regard to the circumstances of the then present times, any useful instruction could be derived: distributive law, penal law, international law, political economy, so far from existing as sciences, had scarcely obtained a name: in all those departments under the head of *quid faciendum*, a mere blank: the whole literature of the age consisted of a meagre chronicle or two, containing short memorandums of the usual occurrences of war and peace, battles, sieges, executions, revels, deaths, births, processions, ceremonies, and other external events; but with scarce a speech or an incident that could enter into the composition of any such work as a history of the human mind—with scarce an attempt at investigation into causes, characters, or the state of the people at large. Even when at last, little by little, a scrap or two of political instruction came to be obtainable, the proportion of error and mischievous doctrine mixed up with it was so great, that whether a blank unfilled might not have been less prejudicial than a blank thus filled, may reasonably be matter of doubt.

" If we come down to the reign of James I, we shall find that Solomon of his time eminently eloquent as well as learned, not

only among crowned but among uncrowned heads, marking out for prohibition and punishment the practices of devils and witches, and without the slightest objection on the part of the great characters of that day in their high situations, consigning men to death and torment for the misfortune of not being so well acquainted as he was with the composition of the Godhead.

"Under the name of exorcism the Catholic liturgy contains a form of procedure for driving out devils;—even with the help of this instrument, the operation cannot be performed with the desired success, but by an operator qualified by holy orders for the working of this as well as so many other wonders. In our days and in our country the same object is attained, and beyond comparison more effectually, by so cheap an instrument as a common newspaper; before this talisman, not only devils but ghosts, vampires, witches, and all their kindred tribes, are driven out of the land, never to return again! The touch of holy water is not so intolerable to them as the bare smell of printers' ink."

Fallacy of Irrevocable Laws.—A law, says Mr. Bentham (no matter to what effect) is proposed to a legislative assembly, who are called upon to reject it, upon the single ground that by those who in some former period exercised the same power, a regulation was made, having for its object to preclude forever, or to the end of an unexpired period, all succeeding legislators from enacting a law to any such effect as that now proposed.

Now it appears quite evident that, at every period of time, every legislature must be endowed with all those powers which the exigency of the times may require; and any attempt to infringe on this power is inadmissible and absurd. The sovereign power, at any one period, can only form a blind guess at the measures which may be necessary for any future period; but by this principle of immutable laws, the government is transferred from those who are necessarily the best judges of what they want, to others who can know little or nothing about the matter. The thirteenth century decides for the fourteenth. The fourteenth makes laws for the fifteenth. The fifteenth hermetically seals up the sixteenth, which tyrannizes over the seventeenth, which again tells the eighteenth how it is to act,

under circumstances which cannot be foreseen, and how it is to conduct itself in exigencies which no human wit can anticipate.

"Men who have a century more experience to ground their judgments on, surrender their intellect to men who had a century less experience, and who, unless that deficiency constitutes a claim, have no claim to preference. If the prior generation were, in respect of intellectual qualification, ever so much superior to the subsequent generation—if it understood so much better than the subsequent generation itself the interest of that subsequent generation—could it have been in an equal degree anxious to promote that interest, and consequently equally attentive to those facts with which, though in order to form a judgment it ought to have been, it is impossible that it should have been, acquainted? In a word, will its love for that subsequent generation be quite so great as that same generation's love for itself?

"Not even here, after a moment's deliberate reflection, will the assertion be in the affirmative. And yet it is their prodigious anxiety for the welfare of their posterity that produces the propensity of these sages to tie up the hands of this same posterity forever more—to act as guardians to its perpetual and incurable weakness, and take its conduct forever out of its own hands.

"If it be right that the conduct of the nineteenth century should be determined not by its own judgment but by that of the eighteenth, it will be equally right that the conduct of the twentieth century should be determined not by its own judgment but by that of the nineteenth. And if the same principle were still pursued, what at length would be the consequence? —that in process of time the practice of legislation would be at an end. The conduct and fate of all men would be determined by those who neither knew nor cared anything about the matter; and the aggregate body of the living would remain forever in subjection to an inexorable tyranny, exercised as it were by the aggregate body of the dead."

The despotism, as Mr. Bentham well observes, of Nero or Caligula would be more tolerable than an "irrevocable law." The despot, through fear or favor, or in a lucid interval, might relent; but how are the Parliament who made the Scotch

Union, for example, to be awakened from that dust in which they repose—the jobber and the patriot, the speaker and the doorkeeper, the silent voters and the men of rich allusions, Cannings and cultivators, Barings and beggars—making irrevocable laws for men who toss their remains about with spades, and use the relics of these legislators to give breadth to broccoli, and to aid the vernal eruption of asparagus?

If the law be good, it will support itself; if bad, it should not be supported by "irrevocable theory," which is never resorted to but as the veil of abuses. All living men must possess the supreme power over their own happiness at every particular period. To suppose that there is anything which a whole nation cannot do, which they deem to be essential to their happiness, and that they cannot do it, because another generation, long ago dead and gone, said it must not be done, is mere nonsense. While you are captain of the vessel, do what you please; but the moment you quit the ship I become as omnipotent as you. You may leave me as much advice as you please, but you cannot leave me commands; though, in fact, this is the only meaning which can be applied to what are called irrevocable laws. It appeared to the legislature for the time being to be of immense importance to make such and such a law. Great good was gained, or great evil avoided, by enacting it. Pause before you alter an institution which has been deemed to be of so much importance. This is prudence and common-sense; the rest is the exaggeration of fools, or the artifice of knaves, who eat up fools. What endless nonsense has been talked of our navigation laws! What wealth has been sacrificed to either before they were repealed! How impossible it appeared to Noodledom to repeal them! They were considered of the irrevocable class—a kind of law over which the dead only were omnipotent, and the living had no power. Frost, it is true, cannot be put off by act of Parliament, nor can spring be accelerated by any majority of both houses. It is, however, quite a mistake to suppose that any alteration of any of the articles of union is as much out of the jurisdiction of Parliament as these meteorological changes. In every year, and every day of that year, living men have a right to make their own laws and manage their own affairs; to break through the tyranny of the antespirants—the people who

breathed before them—and to do what they please for themselves. Such supreme power cannot indeed be well exercised by the people at large; it must be exercised therefore by the delegates, or Parliament, whom the people choose; and such Parliament, disregarding the superstitious reverence for "irrevocable laws," can have no other criterion of wrong and right than that of public utility.

When a law is considered as immutable, and the immutable law happens at the same time to be too foolish and mischievous to be endured, instead of being repealed, it is clandestinely evaded, or openly violated; and thus the authority of all law is weakened.

Where a nation has been ancestorially bound by foolish and improvident treaties, ample notice must be given of their termination. Where the State has made ill-advised grants, or rash bargains with individuals, it is necessary to grant proper compensation. The most difficult case, certainly, is that of the union of nations, where a smaller number of the weaker nation is admitted into the larger senate of the greater nation, and will be overpowered if the question come to a vote; but the lesser nation must run this risk; it is not probable that any violation of articles will take place till they are absolutely called for by extreme necessity. But let the danger be what it may, no danger is so great, no supposition so foolish, as to consider any human law as irrevocable. The shifting attitude of human affairs would often render such a condition an intolerable evil to all parties. The absurd jealousy of our countrymen at the Union secured heritable jurisdiction to the owners; nine and thirty years afterward they were abolished, in the very teeth of the Act of Union, and to the evident promotion of the public good.

Continuity of a Law by Oath.—The sovereign of England at his coronation takes an oath to maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant religion, as established by law, and to preserve to the bishops and clergy of this realm the rights and privileges which by law appertain to them, and to preserve inviolate the doctrine, discipline, worship, and the government of the Church. It has been suggested that by this oath the King stands precluded from granting those indulgences to the Irish Catholics which

are included in the bill for their emancipation. The true meaning of these provisions is of course to be decided, if doubtful, by the same legislative authority which enacted them. But a different notion it seems is now afloat. The King for the time being (we are putting an imaginary case) thinks as an individual that he is not maintaining the doctrine, discipline, and rights of the Church of England, if he grant any extension of civil rights to those who are not members of that Church; that he is violating his oath by so doing. This oath, then, according to this reasoning, is the great palladium of the Church. As long as it remains inviolate the Church is safe. How, then, can any monarch who has taken it ever consent to repeal it? How can he, consistently with his oath for the preservation of the privileges of the Church, contribute his part to throw down so strong a bulwark as he deems his oath to be! The oath, then, cannot be altered. It must remain under all circumstances of society the same. The King who has taken it is bound to continue it, and to refuse his sanction to any bill for its future alteration, because it prevents him, and, he must needs think, will prevent others, from granting dangerous immunities to the enemies of the Church.

Here, then, is an irrevocable law—a piece of absurd tyranny exercised by the rulers of Queen Anne's time upon the government of 1825—a certain art of potting and preserving a kingdom in one shape, attitude, and flavor—and in this way it is that an institution appears like old ladies' sweetmeats and made wines—Apricot Jam 1822—Currant Wine 1819—Court of Chancery 1427—Penal Laws against Catholics 1676. The difference is, that the ancient woman is a better judge of mouldy commodities than the illiberal part of his Majesty's ministers. The potting lady goes sniffing about and admitting light and air to prevent the progress of decay; while to him of the woolsack all seems doubly dear in proportion as it is antiquated, worthless, and unusable. It ought not to be in the power of the sovereign to tie up his own hands, much less the hands of his successors. If the sovereign were to oppose his own opinion to that of the two other branches of the legislature, and himself to decide what he considers to be for the benefit of the Protestant Church, and what not, a king who has spent his whole life in the frivolous occupation of a court may by per-

version of understanding conceive measures most salutary to the Church to be most pernicious, and, persevering obstinately in his own error, may frustrate the wisdom of his parliament, and perpetuate the most inconceivable folly! If Henry VIII had argued in this manner we should have had no Reformation. If George III had always argued in this manner the Catholic code would never have been relaxed. And thus a King, however incapable of forming an opinion upon serious subjects, has nothing to do but pronounce the word "Conscience," and the whole power of the country is at his feet.

Can there be greater absurdity than to say that a man is acting contrary to his conscience who surrenders his opinion upon any subject to those who must understand the subject better than himself? I think my ward has a claim to the estate; but the best lawyers tell me he has none. I think my son capable of undergoing the fatigues of a military life; but the best physicians say he is much too weak. My Parliament say this measure will do the Church no harm; but I think it very pernicious to the Church. Am I acting contrary to my conscience because I apply much higher intellectual powers than my own to the investigation and protection of these high interests?

"According to the form in which it is conceived, any such engagement is in effect either a check or a license:—a license under the appearance of a check, and for that very reason but the more efficiently operative.

"Chains to the man in power? Yes:—but only such as he figures with on the stage; to the spectators as imposing, to himself as light as possible. Modelled by the wearer to suit his own purposes, they serve to rattle but not to restrain.

"Suppose a king of Great Britain and Ireland to have expressed his fixed determination, in the event of any proposed law being tendered to him for his assent, to refuse such assent, and this not on the persuasion that the law would not be 'for the utility of the subjects,' but that by his coronation oath he stands precluded from so doing, the course proper to be taken by Parliament, the course pointed out by principle and precedent, would be a vote of abdication—a vote declaring the king to have abdicated his royal authority, and that, as in case of

death or incurable mental derangement, now is the time for the person next in succession to take his place.

"In the celebrated case in which a vote to this effect was actually passed, the declaration of abdication was, in lawyers' language, a fiction—in plain truth, a falsehood, and that falsehood a mockery; not a particle of his power was it the wish of James to abdicate, to part with, but to increase it to a maximum was the manifest object of all his efforts. But in the case here supposed, with respect to a part, and that a principal part of the royal authority, the will and purpose to abdicate is actually declared; and this being such a part, without which the remainder cannot, 'to the utility of the subjects,' be exercised, the remainder must of necessity be, on their part and for their sake, added."

SELF-TRUMPETER'S FALLACY.—Mr. Bentham explains the self-trumpeter's fallacy as follows:

"There are certain men in office who, in discharge of their functions, arrogate to themselves a degree of probity, which is to exclude all imputations and all inquiry. Their assertions are to be deemed equivalent to proof, their virtues are guaranties for the faithful discharge of their duties, and the most implicit confidence is to be reposed in them on all occasions. If you expose any abuse, propose any reform, call for securities, inquiry, or measures to promote publicity, they set up a cry of surprise, amounting almost to indignation, as if their integrity were questioned or their honor wounded. With all this, they dexterously mix up intimations that the most exalted patriotism, honor, and perhaps religion, are the only sources of all their actions."

Of course every man will try what he can effect by these means; but (as Mr. Bentham observes) if there be any one maxim in politics more certain than another, it is that no possible degree of virtue in the governor can render it expedient for the governed to dispense with good laws and good institutions. Madame De Staël (to her disgrace) said to the Emperor of Russia: "Sire, your character is a constitution for your country, and your conscience its guaranty." His reply was: *"Quand cela serait, je ne serais jamais qu'un accident heureux;"* and this we think one of the truest and most brilliant replies ever made by monarch.

Laudatory Personalities.—"The object of laudatory personalities is to effect the rejection of a measure on account of the alleged good character of those who oppose it, and the argument advanced is: 'The measure is rendered unnecessary by the virtues of those who are in power—their opposition is a sufficient authority for the rejection of the measure. The measure proposed implies a distrust of the members of his Majesty's Government; but so great is their integrity, so complete their disinterestedness, so uniformly do they prefer the public advantage to their own, that such a measure is altogether unnecessary. Their disapproval is sufficient to warrant an opposition; precautions can only be requisite where danger is apprehended: here the high character of the individuals in question is a sufficient guaranty against any ground of alarm.'"

The panegyric goes on increasing with the dignity of the lauded person. All are honorable and delightful men. The person who opens the door of the office is a person of approved fidelity; the junior clerk is a model of assiduity; all the clerks are models—seven years' models, eight years' models, nine years' models, and upward. The first clerk is a paragon, and ministers the very perfection of probity and intelligence; and as for the highest magistrate of the State, no adulation is equal to describe the extent of his various merits! It is too condescending, perhaps, to refute such folly as this. But we would just observe that, if the propriety of the measure in question be established by direct arguments, these must be at least as conclusive against the character of those who oppose it as their character can be against the measure.

The effect of such an argument is to give men of good or reputed good character the power of putting a negative on any question not agreeable to their inclinations.

"In every public trust the legislator should, for the purpose of prevention, suppose the trustee disposed to break the trust in every imaginable way in which it would be possible for him to reap from the breach of it any personal advantage. This is the principle on which public institutions ought to be formed, and when it is applied to all men indiscriminately, it is injurious to none. The practical inference is to oppose to such possible (and what will always be probable) breaches of trust every bar that can be opposed consistently with the power requisite for

the efficient and due discharge of the trust. Indeed, these arguments, drawn from the supposed virtues of men in power, are opposed to the first principles on which all laws proceed.

"Such allegations of individual virtue are never supported by specific proof, are scarce ever susceptible of specific disproof, and specific disproof, if offered, could not be admitted in either House of Parliament. If attempted elsewhere, the punishment would fall not on the unworthy trustee, but on him by whom the unworthiness had been proved."

Fallacies of Pretended Danger—*Imputations of Bad Design; of Bad Character; of Bad Motives; of Inconsistency; of Suspicious Connections.*—The object of this class of fallacies is to draw aside attention from the measure to the man, and this in such a manner that, for some real or supposed defect in the author of the measure, a corresponding defect shall be imputed to the measure itself. Thus, "the author of the measure entertains a bad design; therefore the measure is bad. His character is bad, therefore the measure is bad; his motive is bad, I will vote against the measure. On former occasions this same person who proposed the measure was its enemy, therefore the measure is bad. He is on a footing of intimacy with this or that dangerous man, or has been seen in his company, or is suspected of entertaining some of his opinions, therefore the measure is bad. He bears a name that at a former period was borne by a set of men now no more, by whom bad principles were entertained, therefore the measure is bad!"

Now, if the measure be really inexpedient, why not at once show it to be so? If the measure be good, is it bad because a bad man is its author? If bad, is it good because a good man has produced it? What are these arguments but to say to the assembly who are to be the judges of any measure, that their imbecility is too great to allow them to judge of the measure by its own merits, and that they must have recourse to distant and feebler probabilities for that purpose?

"In proportion to the degree of efficiency with which a man suffers these instruments of deception to operate upon his mind, he enables bad men to exercise over him a sort of power, the thought of which ought to cover him with shame. Allow this argument the effect of a conclusive one, you put it into the power of any man to draw you at pleasure from the support of every

measure which in your own eyes is good, to force you to give your support to any and every measure which in your own eyes is bad. Is it good?—the bad man embraces it, and by the supposition, you reject it. Is it bad?—he vituperates it, and that suffices for driving you into its embrace. You split upon the rocks because he has avoided them; you miss the harbor because he has steered into it! Give yourself up to any such blind antipathy, you are no less in the power of your adversaries than if, by a correspondently irrational sympathy and obsequiousness, you put yourself into the power of your friends.

"Besides, nothing but laborious application and a clear and comprehensive intellect can enable a man on any given subject to employ successfully relevant arguments drawn from the subject itself. To employ personalities, neither labor nor intellect is required. In this sort of contest the most idle and the most ignorant are quite on a par with, if not superior to, the most industrious and the most highly gifted individuals. Nothing can be more convenient for those who would speak without the trouble of thinking. The same ideas are brought forward over and over again, and all that is required is to vary the turn of expression. Close and relevant arguments have very little hold on the passions, and serve rather to quell than to inflame them; while in personalities there is always something stimulant, whether on the part of him who praises or him who blames. Praise forms a kind of connection between the party praising and the party praised, and vituperation gives an air of courage and independence to the party who blames.

"Ignorance and indolence, friendship and enmity, concurring and conflicting interest, servility and independence, all conspire to give personalities the ascendency they so unhappily maintain. The more we lie under the influence of our own passions, the more we rely on others being affected in a similar degree. A man who can repel these injuries with dignity may often convert them into triumph: 'Strike me, but hear,' says he, and the fury of his antagonist redounds to his own discomfiture."

No Innovation!—To say that all things new are bad is to say that all old things were bad in their commencement: for of all the old things ever seen or heard of there is not one that was not once new. Whatever is now establishment was once

innovation. The first inventor of pews and parish clerks was no doubt considered as a Jacobin in his day. Judges, juries, criers of the court, are all the inventions of ardent spirits, who filled the world with alarm, and were considered as the great precursors of ruin and dissolution. No inoculation, no turnpikes, no reading, no writing, no popery! The fool sayeth in his heart and crieth with his mouth, "I will have nothing new!"

FALLACY OF DISTRUST!—*"What's at the Bottom?"*—This fallacy begins with a virtual admission of the propriety of the measure considered in itself, and thus demonstrates its own futility, and cuts up from under itself the ground which it endeavors to make. A measure is to be rejected for something that, by bare possibility, may be found amiss in some other measure! This is vicarious reprobation; upon this principle Herod instituted his massacre. It is the argument of a driveller to other drivellers, who says: "We are not able to decide upon the evil when it arises; our only safe way is to act upon the general apprehension of evil."

OFFICIAL MALEFACTOR'S SCREEN—*"Attack Us, You Attack Government."*—If this notion is acceded to, everyone who derives at present any advantage from misrule has it in fee-simple, and all abuses, present and future, are without remedy. So long as there is anything amiss in conducting the business of government, so long as it can be made better, there can be no other mode of bringing it nearer to perfection than the indication of such imperfections as at the time being exist.

"But so far is it from being true that a man's aversion or contempt for the hands by which the powers of government, or even for the system under which they are exercised, is a proof of his aversion or contempt toward government itself, that, even in proportion to the strength of that aversion or contempt, it is a proof of the opposite affection. What, in consequence of such contempt or aversion, he wishes for is not that there be no hands at all to exercise these powers, but that the hands may be better regulated;—not that those powers should not be exercised at all, but that they should be better exercised;—not that in the exercise of them no rules at all should be pursued, but that the rules by which they are exercised should be a better set of rules.

"All government is a trust, every branch of government is a

trust, and immemorially acknowledged so to be; it is only by the magnitude of the scale that public differ from private trusts. I complain of the conduct of a person in the character of guardian, as domestic guardian, having the care of a minor or insane person. In so doing do I say that guardianship is a bad institution? Does it enter into the head of anyone to suspect me of so doing? I complain of an individual in the character of a commercial agent or assignee of the effects of an insolvent. In so doing do I say that commercial agency is a bad thing? that the practice of vesting in the hands of trustees or assignees the effects of an insolvent for the purpose of their being divided among his creditors is a bad practice? Does any such conceit ever enter into the head of man as that of suspecting me of so doing?"

There are no complaints against government in Turkey—no motions in Parliament, no "Morning Chronicles," and no "Edinburgh Reviews": yet of all countries in the world it is that in which revolts and revolutions are the most frequent.

It is so far from true that no good government can exist consistently with such disclosure, that no good government can exist without it. It is quite obvious to all who are capable of reflection that by no other means than by lowering the governors in the estimation of the people can there be hope or chance of beneficial change. To infer from this wise endeavor to lessen the existing rulers in the estimation of the people, a wish of dissolving the government, is either artifice or error. The physician who intentionally weakens the patient by bleeding him has no intention he should perish.

The greater the quantity of respect a man receives, independently of good conduct, the less good is his behavior likely to be. It is the interest, therefore, of the public in the case of each to see that the respect paid to him should, as completely as possible, depend upon the goodness of his behavior in the execution of his trust. But it is, on the contrary, the interest of the trustee that the respect, the money, or any other advantage he receives in virtue of his office, should be as great, as secure, and as independent of conduct as possible. Soldiers expect to be shot at; public men must expect to be attacked, and sometimes unjustly. It keeps up the habit of considering their conduct as exposed to scrutiny; on the part of the people at large it

keeps alive the expectation of witnessing such attacks, and the habit of looking out for them. The friends and supporters of government have always greater facility in keeping and raising it up than its adversaries have for lowering it.

ACCUSATION-SCARER'S DEVICE—*"Infamy Must Attach Somewhere."*—This fallacy consists in representing the character of a calumniator as necessarily and justly attaching upon him who, having made a charge of misconduct against any person possessed of political power or influence, fails of producing evidence sufficient for their conviction.

"If taken as a general proposition, applying to all public accusations, nothing can be more mischievous as well as fallacious. Supposing the charge unfounded, the delivery of it may have been accompanied with *mala fides* (consciousness of its injustice), with *temerity* only, or it may have been perfectly blameless. It is in the first case alone that infamy can with propriety attach upon him who brings it forward. A charge really groundless may have been honestly believed to be well founded, *i.e.*, believed with a sort of provisional credence, sufficient for the purpose of engaging a man to do his part toward the bringing about an investigation, but without sufficient reasons. But a charge may be perfectly groundless without attaching the smallest particle of blame upon him who brings it forward. Suppose him to have heard from one or more, presenting themselves to him in the character of percipient witnesses, a story which, either *in toto*, or perhaps only in circumstances, though in circumstances of the most material importance, should prove false and mendacious, how is the person who hears this and acts accordingly to blame? What sagacity can enable a man previously to legal investigation, a man who has no power that can enable him to insure correctness or completeness on the part of this extrajudicial testimony, to guard against deception in such a case?"

FALLACY OF FALSE CONSOLATION—*"What is the Matter with You?—What Would You Have?—Look at the People There, and There; Think how much Better Off You Are than They Are—Your Prosperity and Liberty are Objects of Their Envy; Your Institutions, Models of Their Imitation."*—It is not the desire to look to the bright side that is blamed, but when a particular suffering, produced by an assigned cause, has been

pointed out, the object of many apologists is to turn the eyes of inquirers and judges into any other quarter in preference. If a man's tenants were to come with a general encomium on the prosperity of the country instead of a specified sum, would it be accepted? In a court of justice in an action for damages did ever any such device occur as that of pleading assets in the hands of a third person? There is in fact no country so poor and so wretched in every element of prosperity, in which matter for this argument might not be found. Were the prosperity of the country tenfold as great as at present, the absurdity of the argument would not in the least degree be lessened. Why should the smallest evil be endured which can be cured because others suffer patiently under greater evils? Should the smallest improvement attainable be neglected because others remain contented in a state of still greater inferiority?

"Seriously and pointedly in the character of a bar to any measure of relief, no, nor to the most trivial improvement, can it ever be employed. Suppose a bill brought in for converting an impassable road anywhere into a passable one, would any man stand up to oppose it who could find nothing better to urge against it than the multitude and goodness of the roads we have already? No: when in the character of a serious bar to the measure in hand, be that measure what it may, an argument so palpably inapplicable is employed, it can only be for the purpose of creating a diversion;—of turning aside the minds of men from the subject really in hand to a picture which, by its beauty, it is hoped, may engross the attention of the assembly, and make them forget for the moment for what purpose they came there."

The Quietist, or No Complaint.—"A new law of measure being proposed in the character of a remedy for some incontestable abuse or evil, an objection is frequently started to the following effect:—'The measure is unnecessary. Nobody complains of disorder in that shape, in which it is the aim of your measure to propose a remedy to it. But even when *no* cause of complaint has been found to exist, especially under governments which admit of complaints, men have in general not been slow to complain; much less where any just cause of complaint has existed.' The argument amounts to this:—Nobody complains, therefore nobody suffers. It amounts to a veto on all

measures of precaution or prevention, and goes to establish a maxim in legislation directly opposed to the most ordinary prudence of common life; it enjoins us to build no parapets to a bridge till the number of accidents has raised a universal clamor."

PROCRASTINATOR'S ARGUMENT—*"Wait a Little; This is Not the Time."*—This is the common argument of men who, being in reality hostile to a measure, are ashamed or afraid of appearing to be so. *To-day* is the plea—*eternal exclusion* commonly the object. It is the same sort of quirk as a plea of abatement in law—which is never employed but on the side of a dishonest defendant, whose hope it is to obtain an ultimate triumph, by overwhelming his adversary with despair, impoverishment, and lassitude. Which is the properest day to do good? which is the properest day to remove a nuisance? We answer, the very first day a man can be found to propose the removal of it; and whoever opposes the removal of it on that day will (if he dare) oppose it on every other. There is in the minds of many feeble friends to virtue and improvement, an imaginary period for the removal of evils, which it would certainly be worth while to wait for, if there was the smallest chance of its ever arriving—a period of unexampled peace and prosperity, when a patriotic king and an enlightened mob united their ardent efforts for the amelioration of human affairs; when the oppressor is as delighted to give up the oppression, as the oppressed is to be liberated from it; when the difficulty and the unpopularity would be to continue the evil, not to abolish it! These are the periods when fair-weather philosophers are willing to venture out and hazard a little for the general good. But the history of human nature is so contrary to all this, that almost all improvements are made after the bitterest resistance, and in the midst of tumults and civil violence—the worst period at which they can be made, compared to which any period is eligible, and should be seized hold of by the friends of salutary reform.

SNAIL'S PACE ARGUMENT—*"One Thing at a Time!—Not Too Fast!—Slow and Sure!*—Importance of the business—extreme difficulty of the business—danger of innovation—need of caution and circumspection—impossibility of foreseeing all consequences—danger of precipitation—everything should be gradual—one thing at a time—this is not the time—great oc-

cupation at present—wait for more leisure—people well satisfied—no petitions presented—no complaints heard—no such mischief has yet taken place—stay till it has taken place! Such is the prattle which the magpie in office, who, understanding nothing, yet understands that he must have something to say on every subject, shouts out among his auditors as a succedaneum to thought."

Vague Generalities.—Vague generalities comprehend a numerous class of fallacies resorted to by those who, in preference to the determinate expressions which they might use, adopt others more vague and indeterminate.

Take, for instance, the terms government, laws, morals, religion. Everybody will admit that there are in the world bad governments, bad laws, bad morals, and bad religions. The bare circumstance, therefore, of being engaged in exposing the defects of government, law, morals, and religion, does not of itself afford the slightest presumption that a writer is engaged in anything blamable. If his attack be only directed against that which is bad in each, his efforts may be productive of good to any extent. This essential distinction, however, the defender of abuses uniformly takes care to keep out of sight; and boldly imputes to his antagonists an intention to subvert all government, law, morals, and religion. Propose anything with a view to the improvement of the existing practice, in relation to law, government, and religion, he will treat you with an oration upon the necessity and utility of law, government, and religion. Among the several cloudy appellatives which have been commonly employed as cloaks for misgovernment, there is none more conspicuous in this atmosphere of illusion than the word order. As often as any measure is brought forward which has for its object to lessen the sacrifice made by the many to the few, social order is the phrase commonly opposed to its progress.

"By a defalcation made from any part of the mass of fictitious delay, vexation, and expense, out of which, and in proportion to which, lawyers' profit is made to flow—by any defalcation made from the mass of needless and worse than useless emolument to office, with or without service or pretence of service—by any addition endeavored to be made to the quantity, or improvement in the quality of service rendered, or time bestowed in service rendered in return for such emolument—by

every endeavor that has for its object the persuading the people to place their fate at the disposal of any other agents than those in whose hands breach of trust is certain, due fulfilment of it morally and physically impossible—social order is said to be endangered, and threatened to be destroyed."

In the same way "Establishment" is a word in use to protect the bad parts of establishments, by charging those who wish to remove or alter them, with a wish to subvert all good establishments.

Mischievous fallacies also circulate from the convertible use of what Mr. B. is pleased to call dyslogistic and eulogistic terms. Thus, a vast concern is expressed for the "liberty of the press," and the utmost abhorrence of its "licentiousness": but then, by the licentiousness of the press is meant every disclosure by which any abuse is brought to light and exposed to shame—by the "liberty of the press" is meant only publications from which no such inconvenience is to be apprehended; and the fallacy consists in employing the sham approbation of liberty as a mask for the real opposition to all free discussion. To write a pamphlet so ill that nobody will read it; to animadvert in terms so weak and insipid upon great evils, that no disgust is excited at the vice, and no apprehension in the evil-doer, is a fair use of the liberty of the press, and is not only pardoned by the friends of government, but draws from them the most fervent eulogium. The licentiousness of the press consists in doing the thing boldly and well, in striking terror into the guilty, and in rousing the attention of the public to the defence of their highest interests. This is the licentiousness of the press held in the greatest horror by timid and corrupt men, and punished by semi-animous, semi-cadaverous judges, with a captivity of many years. In the same manner the dyslogistic and eulogistic fallacies are used in the case of reform.

"Between all abuses whatsoever there exists that connection —between all persons who see, each of them, any one abuse in which an advantage results to himself, there exists, in point of interest, that close and sufficiently understood connection, of which intimation has been given already. To no one abuse can correction be administered without endangering the existence of every other.

"If, then, with this inward determination not to suffer, so

far as depends upon himself, the adoption of any reform which he is able to prevent, it should seem to him necessary or advisable to put on for a cover the profession or appearance of a desire to contribute to such reform—in pursuance of the device or fallacy here in question, he will represent that which goes by the name of reform as distinguishable into two species; one of them a fit subject for approbation, the other for disapprobation. That which he thus professes to have marked for approbation, he will accordingly for the expression of such approbation, characterize by some adjunct of the eulogistic cast, such as moderate, for example, or temperate, or practical, or practicable.

" To the other of these nominally distinct species, he will, at the same time, attach some adjunct of the dyslogistic cast, such as violent, intemperate, extravagant, outrageous, theoretical, speculative, and so forth.

" Thus, then, in profession and to appearance, there are in his conception of the matter two distinct and opposite species of reform, to one of which his approbation, to the other his disapprobation, is attached. But the species to which his approbation is attached is an empty species—a species in which no individual is, or is intended to be, contained.

" The species to which his disapprobation is attached is, on the contrary, a crowded species, a receptacle in which the whole contents of the *genus*—of the *genus* ' Reform '—are intended to be included."

Anti-rational Fallacies.—When reason is in opposition to a man's interests his study will naturally be to render the faculty itself, and whatever issues from it, an object of hatred and contempt. The sarcasm and other figures of speech employed on the occasion are directed not merely against reason but against thought, as if there were something in the faculty of thought that rendered the exercise of it incompatible with useful and successful practice. Sometimes a plan, which would not suit the official person's interest, is without more ado pronounced a speculative one; and, by this observation, all need of rational and deliberate discussion is considered to be superseded. The first effort of the corruptionist is to fix the epithet speculative upon any scheme which he thinks may cherish the spirit of reform. The expression is hailed with the greatest delight by bad and feeble men, and repeated with the most un-

wearied energy; and to the word "speculative," by way of reinforcement, are added: *theoretical, visionary, chimerical, romantic, Utopian.*

"Sometimes a distinction is taken, and thereupon a concession made. The plan is good in theory, but it would be bad in practice, *i.e.,* its being good in theory does not hinder its being bad in practice.

"Sometimes, as if in consequence of a further progress made in the art of irrationality, the plan is pronounced to be "too good to be practicable"; and its being so good as it is, is thus represented as the very cause of its being bad in practice.

"In short, such is the perfection at which this art is at length arrived, that the very circumstance of a plan's being susceptible of the appellation of a *plan*, has been gravely stated as a circumstance sufficient to warrant its being rejected—rejected, if not with hatred, at any rate with a sort of accompaniment which, to the million, is commonly felt still more galling—with contempt."

There is a propensity to push theory too far; but what is the just inference? not that theoretical propositions (*i.e.,* all propositions of any considerable comprehension or extent) should, from such their extent, be considered to be false *in toto,* but only that, in the particular case, should inquiry be made whether, supposing the proposition to be in the character of a rule generally true, an exception ought to be taken out of it. It might almost be imagined that there was something wicked or unwise in the exercise of thought; for everybody feels a necessity for disclaiming it. "I am not given to speculation, I am no friend to theories." Can a man disclaim theory, can he disclaim speculation, without disclaiming thought?

The description of persons by whom this fallacy is chiefly employed are those who, regarding a plan as adverse to their interests, and not finding it on the ground of general utility exposed to any preponderant objection, have recourse to this objection in the character of an instrument of contempt, in the view of preventing those from looking into it who might have been otherwise disposed. It is by the fear of seeing it practised that they are drawn to speak of it as impracticable. "Upon the face of it (exclaims some feeble or pensioned gentleman) it carries that air of plausibility, that, if you were not upon your

guard, might engage you to bestow more or less attention upon it; but were you to take the trouble, you would find that (as it is with all these plans which promise so much) practicability would at last be wanting to it. To save yourself from this trouble, the wisest course you can take is to put the plan aside, and to think no more about the matter." This is always accompanied with a peculiar grin of triumph.

The whole of these fallacies may be gathered together in a little oration, which we will denominate the "Noodle's Oration":—

"What would our ancestors say to this, Sir? How does this measure tally with their institutions? How does it agree with their experience? Are we to put the wisdom of yesterday in competition with the wisdom of centuries? [*Hear! hear!*] Is beardless youth to show no respect for the decisions of mature age? [*Loud cries of hear! hear!*] If this measure be right, would it have escaped the wisdom of those Saxon progenitors to whom we are indebted for so many of our best political institutions? Would the Dane have passed it over? Would the Norman have rejected it? Would such a notable discovery have been reserved for these modern and degenerate times? Besides, Sir, if the measure itself is good, I ask the honorable gentleman if this is the time for carrying it into execution—whether, in fact, a more unfortunate period could have been selected than that which he has chosen? If this were an ordinary measure I should not oppose it with so much vehemence; but, Sir, it calls in question the wisdom of an irrevocable law—of a law passed at the memorable period of the Revolution. What right have we, Sir, to break down this firm column on which the great men of that age stamped a character of eternity? Are not all authorities against this measure—Pitt, Fox, Cicero, and the Attorney- and Solicitor-General? The proposition is new, Sir; it is the first time it was ever heard in this House. I am not prepared, Sir—this House is not prepared—to receive it. The measure implies a distrust of his Majesty's Government; their disapproval is sufficient to warrant opposition. Precaution only is requisite where danger is apprehended. Here the high character of the individuals in question is a sufficient guarantee against any ground of alarm. Give not, then, your sanction to this measure; for, whatever be its character, if you do

give your sanction to it, the same man by whom this is proposed will propose to you others to which it will be impossible to give your consent. I care very little, Sir, for the ostensible measure; but what is there behind? What are the honorable gentleman's future schemes? If we pass this bill, what fresh concessions may he not require? What further degradation is he planning for his country? Talk of evil and inconvenience, Sir! look to other countries—study other aggregations and societies of men, and then see whether the laws of this country demand a remedy or deserve a panegyric. Was the honorable gentleman (let me ask him) always of this way of thinking? Do I not remember when he was the advocate, in this House, of very opposite opinions? I not only quarrel with his present sentiments, Sir, but I declare very frankly I do not like the party with which he acts. If his own motives were as pure as possible, they cannot but suffer contamination from those with whom he is politically associated. This measure may be a boon to the Constitution, but I will accept no favor to the Constitution from such hands. [*Loud cries of hear! hear!*] I profess myself, Sir, an honest and upright member of the British Parliament, and I am not afraid to profess myself an enemy to all change and all innovation. I am satisfied with things as they are; and it will be my pride and pleasure to hand down this country to my children as I received it from those who preceded me. The honorable gentleman pretends to justify the severity with which he has attacked the noble lord who presides in the Court of Chancery. But I say such attacks are pregnant with mischief to government itself. Oppose ministers, you oppose government; disgrace ministers, you disgrace government; bring ministers into contempt, you bring government into contempt; and anarchy and civil war are the consequences. Besides, sir, the measure is unnecessary. Nobody complains of disorder in that shape in which it is the aim of your measure to propose a remedy to it. The business is one of the greatest importance; there is need of the greatest caution and circumspection. Do not let us be precipitate, Sir; it is impossible to foresee all consequences. Everything should be gradual; the example of a neighboring nation should fill us with alarm! The honorable gentleman has taxed me with illiberality, Sir; I deny the charge. I hate innovation, but I love improvement. I am an enemy to the corrup-

tion of government, but I defend its influence. I dread reform, but I dread it only when it is intemperate. I consider the liberty of the press as the great palladium of the Constitution; but, at the same time, I hold the licentiousness of the press in the greatest abhorrence. Nobody is more conscious than I am of the splendid abilities of the honorable mover, but I tell him at once his scheme is too good to be practicable. It savors of Utopia. It looks well in theory, but it won't do in practice. It will not do, I repeat, Sir, in practice; and so the advocates of the measure will find, if, unfortunately, it should find its way through Parliament. [*Cheers.*] The source of that corruption to which the honorable member alludes is in the minds of the people; so rank and extensive is that corruption, that no political reform can have any effect in removing it. Instead of reforming others—instead of reforming the State, the Constitution, and everything that is most excellent, let each man reform himself! let him look at home, he will find there enough to do without looking abroad and aiming at what is out of his power. [*Loud cheers.*] And now, Sir, as it is frequently the custom in this House to end with a quotation, and as the gentleman who preceded me in the debate has anticipated me in my favorite quotation of the 'Strong pull and the long pull,' I shall end with the memorable words of the assembled barons: '*Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari.*'"

"Upon the whole, the following are the characters which appertain in common to all the several arguments here distinguished by the name of fallacies:—

"1. Whatsoever be the measure in hand, they are, with relation to it, irrelevant.

"2. They are all of them such, that the application of these irrelevant arguments affords a presumption either of the weakness or total absence of relevant arguments on the side on which they are employed.

"3. To any good purpose they are all of them unnecessary.

"4. They are all of them not only capable of being applied, but actually in the habit of being applied, and with advantage, to bad purposes, viz.: to the obstruction and defeat of all such measures as have for their object the removal of the abuses or other imperfections still discernible in the frame and practice of the government.

"5. By means of the irrelevancy, they all of them consume and misapply time, thereby obstructing the course and retarding the progress of all necessary and useful business.

"6. By that irritative quality which, in virtue of their irrelevancy, with the improbity or weakness of which it is indicative, they possess, all of them, in a degree more or less considerable, but in a more particular degree such of them as consist in personalities, are productive of ill-humor, which in some instances has been productive of bloodshed, and is continually productive, as above, of waste of time and hindrance of business.

"7. On the part of those who, whether in spoken or written discourses, give utterance to them, they are indicative either of improbity or intellectual weakness, or of a contempt for the understanding of those on whose minds they are destined to operate.

"8. On the part of those on whom they operate, they are indicative of intellectual weakness; and on the part of those in and by whom they are pretended to operate, they are indicative of improbity, viz., in the shape of insincerity.

"The practical conclusion is, that in proportion as the acceptance, and thence the utterance, of them can be prevented, the understanding of the public will be strengthened, the morals of the public will be purified, and the practice of government improved."

ON POESY OR ART

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BY

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

1772—1834

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the youngest of a numerous family, was born at Ottery St. Mary, in Devonshire, on October 21, 1772. He received his early education at Christ's Hospital, where Charles Lamb was one of his school-fellows. His early love of poetry was nursed and inspired by a perusal of the sonnets of W. L. Bowles. When nineteen years of age, on obtaining his presentation from Christ's Hospital, he entered Jesus College, Cambridge, gaining in classics a gold medal for a Greek ode. About 1794 his acquaintance began with Southey; Coleridge and Southey were afterwards married on the same day to two sisters, and settled at Nether Stowey, in Somersetshire, where they also met Wordsworth. Some of Coleridge's finest pieces were written there, such as the "Ancient Mariner," the "Ode on the Departing Year," and the first part of "Christabel." Coleridge visited Germany through the liberality of the Messrs. Wedgwood, the Staffordshire potters, and on returning in 1800 went to reside with Southey at Keswick, Wordsworth then staying at Grasmere. In 1804 he visited Malta. In the latter part of his life he resided with his friend and medical adviser, Mr. Gillman, at Highgate, delighting a large circle by his splendid conversational powers. Here he died on July 20, 1834, in the sixty-second year of his age. The plan of the periodical publication, the "Friend," occurred to Coleridge while staying at Keswick, the first number of which appeared on June 8, 1809, and the last on March 15, 1810. As a philosopher and theologian, the influence of Coleridge has been very great, and probably is so still, notwithstanding the apparent predominance of a less spiritual philosophy than his. Although he did not live to complete the grand system of religious philosophy which he appears to have projected, the massive fragments he has left suffice to show more than the outlines of the vast whole. His writings are pervaded by a spirit not of this world; and for every earnest student they are rich in lessons of truth, wisdom, and faith. "On Poesy or Art" is ranked as one of Coleridge's most delightful essays.

ON POESY OR ART

MAN communicates by articulation of sounds, and paramountly by the memory in the ear; nature by the impression of bounds and surfaces on the eye, and through the eye it gives significance and appropriation, and thus the conditions of memory, or the capability of being remembered, to sounds, smells, etc. Now Art, used collectively for painting, sculpture, architecture, and music, is the mediatress between, and reconciler of nature and man. It is, therefore, the power of humanizing nature, of infusing the thoughts and passions of man into everything which is the object of his contemplation; color, form, motion, and sound, are the elements which it combines, and it stamps them into unity in the mould of a moral idea.

The primary art is writing;—primary, if we regard the purpose abstracted from the different modes of realizing it, those steps of progression of which the instances are still visible in the lower degrees of civilization. First, there is mere gesticulation; then rosaries or wampum; then picture-language; then hieroglyphics, and finally alphabetic letters. These all consist of a translation of man into nature, of a substitution of the visible for the audible.

The so-called music of savage tribes as little deserves the name of art for the understanding as the ear warrants it for music. Its lowest state is a mere expression of passion by sounds which the passion itself necessitates;—the highest amounts to no more than a voluntary reproduction of these sounds in the absence of the occasioning causes, so as to give the pleasure of contrast—for example, by the various outcries of battle in the song of security and triumph. Poetry also is purely human; for all its materials are from the mind, and all its products are for the mind. But it is the apotheosis of the former state, in which by excitement of the associative

power passion itself imitates order, and the order resulting produces a pleasurable passion, and thus it elevates the mind by making its feelings the object of its reflection. So likewise, while it recalls the sights and sounds that had accompanied the occasions of the original passions, poetry impregnates them with an interest not their own by means of the passions, and yet tempers the passion by the calming power which all distinct images exert on the human soul. In this way poetry is the preparation for art, inasmuch as it avails itself of the forms of nature to recall, to express, and to modify the thoughts and feelings of the mind. Still, however, poetry can only act through the intervention of articulate speech, which is so peculiarly human that in all languages it constitutes the ordinary phrase by which man and nature are contradistinguished. It is the original force of the word "brute," and even "mute" and "dumb" do not convey the absence of sound, but the absence of articulated sounds.

As soon as the human mind is intelligibly addressed by an outward image exclusively of articulate speech, so soon does art commence. But please to observe that I have laid particular stress on the words "human mind"—meaning to exclude thereby all results common to man and all other sentient creatures, and consequently confining myself to the effect produced by the congruity of the animal impression with the reflective powers of the mind; so that not the thing presented, but that which is re-presented by the thing, shall be the source of the pleasure. In this sense nature itself is to a religious observer the art of God; and for the same cause art itself might be defined as of a middle quality between a thought and a thing, or as I said before, the union and reconciliation of that which is nature with that which is exclusively human. It is the figured language of thought, and is distinguished from nature by the unity of all the parts in one thought or idea. Hence nature itself would give us the impression of a work of art, if we could see the thought which is present at once in the whole and in every part; and a work of art will be just in proportion as it adequately conveys the thought, and rich in proportion to the variety of parts which it holds in unity.

If, therefore, the term "mute" be taken as opposed not

to sound but to articulate speech, the old definition of painting will in fact be the true and best definition of the fine arts in general, that is, *muta poesis*, mute poesy, and so of course poesy. And, as all languages perfect themselves by a gradual process of desynonymizing words originally equivalent, I have cherished the wish to use the word "poesy" as the generic or common term, and to distinguish that species of poesy which is not *muta poesis* by its usual name "poetry"; while of all the other species which collectively form the fine arts, there would remain this as the common definition—that they all, like poetry, are to express intellectual purposes, thoughts, conceptions, and sentiments which have their origin in the human mind—not, however, as poetry does, by means of articulate speech, but as nature or the divine art does, by form, color, magnitude, proportion, or by sound, that is, silently or musically.

Well! it may be said—but who has ever thought otherwise? We all know that art is the imitatress of nature. And, doubtless, the truths which I hope to convey would be barren truisms, if all men meant the same by the words "imitate" and "nature." But it would be flattering mankind at large, to presume that such is the fact. First, to imitate. The impression on the wax is not an imitation, but a copy, of the seal; the seal itself is an imitation. But, further, in order to form a philosophic conception, we must seek for the kind, as the heat in ice, invisible light, etc., whilst, for practical purposes, we must have reference to the degree. It is sufficient that philosophically we understand that in all imitation two elements must coexist, and not only coexist, but must be perceived as coexisting. These two constituent elements are likeness and unlikeness, or sameness and difference, and in all genuine creations of art there must be a union of these disparates. The artist may take his point of view where he pleases, provided that the desired effect be perceptibly produced—that there be likeness in the difference, difference in the likeness, and a reconcilement of both in one. If there be likeness to nature without any check of difference, the result is disgusting, and the more complete the delusion, the more loathsome the effect. Why are such simulations of nature, as wax-work figures of men and women, so disagreeable?

Because, not finding the motion and the life which we expected, we are shocked as by a falsehood, every circumstance of detail, which before induced us to be interested, making the distance from truth more palpable. You set out with a supposed reality and are disappointed and disgusted with the deception; while, in respect to a work of genuine imitation, you begin with an acknowledged total difference, and then every touch of nature gives you the pleasure of an approximation to truth. The fundamental principle of all this is undoubtedly the horror of falsehood and the love of truth inherent in the human breast. The Greek tragic dance rested on these principles, and I can deeply sympathize in imagination with the Greeks in this favorite part of their theatrical exhibitions, when I call to mind the pleasure I felt in beholding the combat of the Horatii and Curiatii most exquisitely danced in Italy to the music of Cimarosa.

Secondly, as to nature. We must imitate nature! yes, but what in nature—all and everything? No, the beautiful in nature. And what then is the beautiful? What is beauty? It is, in the abstract, the unity of the manifold, the coalescence of the diverse; in the concrete, it is the union of the shapely (*formosum*) with the vital. In the dead organic it depends on regularity of form, the first and lowest species of which is the triangle with all its modifications, as in crystals, architecture, etc.; in the living organic it is not mere regularity of form, which would produce a sense of formality; neither is it subservient to anything beside itself. It may be present in a disagreeable object, in which the proportion of the parts constitutes a whole; it does not arise from association, as the agreeable does, but sometimes lies in the rupture of association; it is not different to different individuals and nations, as has been said, nor is it connected with the ideas of the good, or the fit, or the useful. The sense of beauty is intuitive, and beauty itself is all that inspires pleasure without, and aloof from, and even contrarily to, interest.

If the artist copies the mere nature, the *natura naturata*, what idle rivalry! If he proceeds only from a given form, which is supposed to answer to the notion of beauty, what an emptiness, what an unreality there always is in his productions, as in Cipriani's pictures! Believe me, you must

master the essence, the *natura naturans*, which presupposes a bond between nature in the higher sense and the soul of man.

The wisdom in nature is distinguished from that in man by the co-instantaneity of the plan and the execution; the thought and the product are one, or are given at once; but there is no reflex act, and hence there is no moral responsibility. In man there is reflection, freedom, and choice; he is, therefore, the head of the visible creation. In the objects of nature are presented, as in a mirror, all the possible elements, steps, and processes of intellect antecedent to consciousness, and therefore to the full development of the intelligential act; and man's mind is the very focus of all the rays of intellect which are scattered throughout the images of nature. Now so to place these images, totalized, and fitted to the limits of the human mind, as to elicit from, and to superinduce upon, the forms themselves the moral reflections to which they approximate, to make the external internal, the internal external, to make nature thought, and thought nature —this is the mystery of genius in the fine arts. Dare I add that the genius must act on the feeling, that body is but a striving to become mind—that it is mind in its essence?

In every work of art there is a reconcilement of the external with the internal; the conscious is so impressed on the unconscious as to appear in it; as compare mere letters inscribed on a tomb with figures themselves constituting the tomb. He who combines the two is the man of genius; and for that reason he must partake of both. Hence there is in genius itself an unconscious activity; nay, that is the genius in the man of genius. And this is the true exposition of the rule that the artist must first eloign himself from nature in order to return to her with full effect. Why this? Because if he were to begin by mere painful copying, he would produce masks only, not forms breathing life. He must out of his own mind create forms according to the severe laws of the intellect, in order to generate in himself that co-ordination of freedom and law, that involution of obedience in the prescript, and of the prescript in the impulse to obey, which assimilates him to nature, and enables him to understand her. He merely absents himself for a season from her, that his own spirit, which has the same ground with nature, may learn her unspoken language

in its main radicals, before he approaches to her endless compositions of them. Yes, not to acquire cold notions—lifeless, technical rules—but living and life-producing ideas, which shall contain their own evidence, the certainty that they are essentially one with the germinal causes in nature—his consciousness being the focus and mirror of both—for this does the artist for a time abandon the external real in order to return to it with a complete sympathy with its internal and actual. For of all we see, hear, feel, and touch the substance is and must be in ourselves; and therefore there is no alternative in reason between the dreary (and thank heaven! almost impossible) belief that everything around us is but a phantom, or that the life which is in us is in them likewise; and that to know is to resemble, when we speak of objects out of ourselves, even as within ourselves to learn is, according to Plato, only to recollect;—the only effective answer to which, that I have been fortunate to meet with, is that which Pope has consecrated for future use in the line—

"And coxcombs vanquish Berkeley with a grin!"

The artist must imitate that which is within the thing, that which is active through form and figure, and discourses to us by symbols—the *Natur-geist*, or spirit of nature, as we unconsciously imitate those whom we love; for so only can he hope to produce any work truly natural in the object and truly human in the effect. The idea which puts the form together cannot itself be the form. It is above form, and is its essence, the universal in the individual, or the individuality itself—the glance and the exponent of the indwelling power.

Each thing that lives has its moment of self-exposition, and so has each period of each thing, if we remove the disturbing forces of accident. To do this is the business of ideal art, whether in images of childhood, youth, or age, in man or in woman. Hence a good portrait is the abstract of the personal; it is not the likeness for actual comparison, but for recollection. This explains why the likeness of a very good portrait is not always recognized; because some persons never abstract, and among these are especially to be numbered the near relations and friends of the subject, in consequence of the constant pressure and check exercised on their minds by

the actual presence of the original. And each thing that only appears to live has also its possible position of relation to life, as nature herself testifies, who, where she cannot be, prophesies her being in the crystallized metal, or the inhaling plant.

The charm, the indispensable requisite, of sculpture is unity of effect. But painting rests in a material remoter from nature, and its compass is therefore greater. Light and shade give external, as well internal, being even with all its accidents, while sculpture is confined to the latter. And here I may observe that the subjects chosen for works of art, whether in sculpture or painting, should be such as really are capable of being expressed and conveyed within the limits of those arts. Moreover, they ought to be such as will affect the spectator by their truth, their beauty, or their sublimity, and therefore they may be addressed to the judgment, the senses, or the reason. The peculiarity of the impression which they may make may be derived either from color and form, or from proportion and fitness, or from the excitement of the moral feelings; or all these may be combined. Such works as do combine these sources of effect must have the preference in dignity.

Imitation of the antique may be too exclusive, and may produce an injurious effect on modern sculpture:—first, generally, because such an imitation cannot fail to have a tendency to keep the attention fixed on externals rather than on the thought within;—secondly, because, accordingly, it leads the artist to rest satisfied with that which is always imperfect, namely, bodily form, and circumscribes his views of mental expression to the ideas of power and grandeur only;—thirdly, because it induces an effort to combine together two incongruous things, that is to say, modern feelings in antique forms;—fourthly, because it speaks in a language, as it were, learned and dead, the tones of which, being unfamiliar, leave the common spectator cold and unimpressed;—and lastly, because it necessarily causes a neglect of thoughts, emotions, and images of profounder interest and more exalted dignity, as motherly, sisterly, and brotherly love, piety, devotion, the divine become human—the Virgin, the Apostle, the Christ. The artist's principle in the statue of a great man should be the illustration

of departed merit; and I cannot but think that a skilful adoption of modern habiliments would, in many instances, give a variety and force of effect which a bigoted adherence to Greek or Roman costume precludes. It is, I believe, from artists finding Greek models unfit for several important modern purposes that we see so many allegorical figures on monuments and elsewhere. Painting was, as it were, a new art, and being unshackled by old models it chose its own subjects, and took an eagle's flight. And a new field seems opened for modern sculpture in the symbolical expression of the ends of life, as in Guy's monument, Chantrey's children in Worcester Cathedral, etc.

Architecture exhibits the greatest extent of the difference from nature which may exist in works of art. It involves all the powers of design, and is sculpture and painting inclusively. It shows the greatness of man, and should at the same time teach him humility.

Music is the most entirely human of the fine arts, and has the fewest *analoga* in nature. Its first delightfulness is simple accordance with the ear; but it is an associated thing, and recalls the deep emotions of the past with an intellectual sense of proportion. Every human feeling is greater and larger than the exciting cause—a proof, I think, that man is designed for a higher state of existence; and this is deeply implied in music in which there is always something more and beyond the immediate expression.

With regard to works in all the branches of the fine arts, I may remark that the pleasure arising from novelty must of course be allowed its due place and weight. This pleasure consists in the identity of two opposite elements—that is to say, sameness and variety. If in the midst of the variety there be not some fixed object for the attention, the unceasing succession of the variety will prevent the mind from observing the difference of the individual objects; and the only thing remaining will be the succession, which will then produce precisely the same effect as sameness. This we experience when we let the trees or hedges pass before the fixed eye during a rapid movement in a carriage, or, on the other hand, when we suffer a file of soldiers or ranks of men in procession to go on before us without resting the eye on anyone in par-

ticular. In order to derive pleasure from the occupation of the mind, the principle of unity must always be present, so that in the midst of the multeity the centripetal force be never suspended, nor the sense be fatigued by the predominance of the centrifugal force. This unity in multeity I have elsewhere stated as the principle of beauty. It is equally the source of pleasure in variety, and in fact a higher term including both. What is the seclusive or distinguishing term between them?

Remember that there is a difference between form as proceeding, and shape as superinduced;—the latter is either the death or the imprisonment of the thing;—the former is its self-witnessing and self-effected sphere of agency. Art would or should be the abridgment of nature. Now the fulness of nature is without character, as water is purest when without taste, smell, or color; but this is the highest, the apex only—it is not the whole. The object of art is to give the whole *ad hominem;* hence each step of nature hath its ideal, and hence the possibility of a climax up to the perfect form of a harmonized chaos.

To the idea of life victory or strife is necessary; as virtue consists not simply in the absence of vices, but in the overcoming of them. So it is in beauty. The sight of what is subordinated and conquered heightens the strength and the pleasure; and this should be exhibited by the artist either inclusively in his figure, or else out of it, and beside it to act by way of supplement and contrast. And with a view to this, remark the seeming identity of body and mind in infants, and thence the loveliness of the former; the commencing separation in boyhood, and the struggle of equilibrium in youth: thence onward the body is first simply indifferent; then demanding the translucency of the mind not to be worse than indifferent; and finally all that presents the body as body becoming almost of an excremental nature.

WAVERLEY, OR 'TIS SIXTY YEARS SINCE

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BY

FRANCIS, LORD JEFFREY

FRANCIS, LORD JEFFREY

1773—1850

Francis Jeffrey, who exercised greater influence on the periodical literature and criticism of this century than any of his contemporaries, was a native of Edinburgh, born on October 23, 1773. After education at the High School of Edinburgh, two sessions at the university of Glasgow, and one session—from October to June, 1791-92—at Queen's College, Oxford, he studied law, and passed as an advocate in 1794. For many years his income did not exceed £100 per annum, but his admirable economy and independent spirit kept him free from debt, and he was indefatigable in the cultivation of his intellectual powers. He was a Whig in politics. His literary ambition and political sentiment found scope in the "Edinburgh Review," the first number of which appeared in October, 1802.

The chief merit and labor attaching to the continuance and the success of the "Edinburgh Review" fell on its accomplished editor. From 1803 to 1829 Mr. Jeffrey had the sole management of the "Review." Besides his general superintendence, Mr. Jeffrey was a large contributor. As a moral writer he was unimpeachable. In poetical criticism he sometimes failed. Where no prejudice or prepossession intervened, he was an admirable critic. If he was not profound, he was interesting and graceful. His little dissertations on the style and works of Cowper, Crabbe, Byron, and Scott, as well as his observations on moral science and the philosophy of life, are eloquent and discriminating, and conceived in a fine spirit of humanity. He seldom gave full scope to the expression of his feelings and sympathies, but they do occasionally break forth and kindle up the pages of his criticism. At times, indeed, his language is poetical in a high degree. The chief defect of his writing is the occasional diffuseness and carelessness of his style. He wrote as he spoke, with great rapidity and with a flood of illustration.

At the bar, Jeffrey's eloquence and intrepidity were not less conspicuous than his literary talents. In 1829 he was, by the unanimous suffrages of his legal brethren, elected Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, and he then resigned the editorship of the "Review" into the hands of another Scottish advocate, Macvey Napier. In 1830, on the formation of Earl Grey's ministry, Jeffrey was nominated to the first office under the crown in Scotland—Lord Advocate—and sat for some time in Parliament. In 1834 he gladly exchanged the turmoil of politics for the duties of a Scottish judge; and as Lord Jeffrey, he sat on the bench until within a few days of his death, on January 26, 1850. As a judge he was noted for undeviating attention, uprightness, and ability; as a citizen, he was esteemed and beloved. He practised a generous though unostentatious hospitality, preserved all the finer qualities of his mind undiminished to the last, and delighted a wide circle of ever-welcome friends and visitors by his rich conversational powers, candor, and humanity. The more important of Jeffrey's contributions to the "Edinburgh Review" were collected by him in 1844, and published in four volumes, since reprinted in one large volume. His review of Scott's "Waverley" is taken from this collection.

WAVERLEY, OR 'TIS SIXTY YEARS SINCE

IT is wonderful what genius and adherence to nature will do, in spite of all disadvantages. Here is a thing obviously very hastily, and, in many places, somewhat unskilfully written—composed, one-half of it, in a dialect unintelligible to four-fifths of the reading population of the country—relating to a period too recent to be romantic and too far gone by to be familiar—and published, moreover, in a quarter of the island where materials and talents for novel-writing have been supposed to be equally wanting.[1] And yet, by the mere force and truth and vivacity of its coloring, already casting the whole tribe of ordinary novels into the shade, and taking its place rather with the rubbish of provincial romances.

The secret of this success, we take it, is merely that the author is a man of genius; and that he has, notwithstanding, had virtue enough to be true to nature throughout; and to content himself, even in the marvellous parts of his story, with copying from actual existences, rather than from the phantasms of his own imagination. The charm which this com-

[1] I have been a good deal at a loss what to do with these famous novels of Sir Walter. On the one hand I could not bring myself to let this collection go forth without some notice of works which, for many years together, had occupied and delighted me more than anything else that ever came under my critical survey; while, on the other, I could not but feel that it would be absurd, and in some sense almost dishonest, to fill these pages with long citations from books which, for the last twenty-five years, have been in the hands of at least fifty times as many readers as are ever likely to look into this publication—and are still as familiar to the generation which has last come into existence, as to those who can yet remember the sensation produced by their first appearance. In point of fact I was informed, but the other day, by Mr. Cadell, that he had actually sold not less than sixty thousand volumes of these extraordinary productions in the course of the preceding year! and that the demand for them, instead of slackening, had been for some time sensibly on the increase. In these circumstances I think I may safely assume that their contents are still so perfectly known as not to require any citations to introduce such of the remarks originally made on them as I may now wish to repeat. And I have therefore come to the determination of omitting almost all the

municates to all works that deal in the representation of human actions and character, is more readily felt than understood; and operates with unfailing efficacy even upon those who have no acquaintance with the originals from which the picture has been borrowed. It requires no ordinary talent, indeed, to choose such realities as may outshine the bright imaginations of the inventive, and so to combine them as to produce the most advantageous effect; but when this is once accomplished the result is sure to be something more firm, impressive, and engaging, than can ever be produced by mere fiction.

The object of the work before us was evidently to present a faithful and animated picture of the manners and state of society that prevailed in this northern part of the island, in the earlier part of last century; and the author has judiciously fixed upon the era of the Rebellion in 1745, not only as enriching his pages with the interest inseparably attached to the narration of such occurrences, but as affording a fair opportunity for bringing out all the contrasted principles and habits which distinguished the different classes of persons who then divided the country, and formed among them the basis of almost all that was peculiar in the national character. That unfortunate contention brought conspicuously to light, and for the last time, the fading image of feudal chivalry in the moun-

quotations and most of the detailed abstracts which appeared in the original reviews; and to retain only the general criticism, and character, or estimate of each performance—together with such incidental observations as may have been suggested by the tenor or success of these wonderful productions. By this course, no doubt, a sad shrinking will be effected in the primitive dimensions of the articles which are here reproduced; and may probably give to what is retained something of a naked and jejune appearance. If it should be so, I can only say that I do not see how I could have helped it; and, after all, it may not be altogether without interest to see, from a contemporary record, what were the first impressions produced by the appearance of this new luminary on our horizon; while the secret of the authorship was yet undivulged, and before the rapid accumulation of its glories had forced on the dullest spectator a sense of its magnitude and power. I may venture, perhaps, also to add, that some of the general speculations of which these reviews suggested the occasion, may, probably, be found as well worth preserving as most of those which have been elsewhere embodied in this experimental and somewhat hazardous publication.

Though living in familiar intercourse with Sir Walter, I need scarcely say that I was not in the secret of his authorship; and, in truth, had no assurance of the fact till the time of its promulgation.

tains, and vulgar fanaticism in the plains; and startled the more polished parts of the land with the wild but brilliant picture of the devoted valor, incorruptible fidelity, patriarchal brotherhood, and savage habits of the Celtic Clans, on the one hand, and the dark, intractable, and domineering bigotry of the Covenanters on the other. Both aspects of society had indeed been formerly prevalent in other parts of the country, but had there been so long superseded by more peaceable habits and milder manners that their vestiges were almost effaced, and their very memory nearly extinguished. The feudal principalities had been destroyed in the South for near three hundred years, and the dominion of the Puritans from the time of the Restoration. When the glens and banded clans of the central Highlands, therefore, were opened up to the gaze of the English, in the course of that insurrection, it seemed as if they were carried back to the days of the Heptarchy; and when they saw the array of the West country Whigs, they might imagine themselves transported to the age of Cromwell. The effect, indeed, is almost as startling at the present moment; and one great source of the interest which the volumes before us undoubtedly possess is to be sought in the surprise that is excited by discovering that in our own country, and almost in our own age, manners and characters existed, and were conspicuous, which we had been accustomed to consider as belonging to remote antiquity, or extravagant romance.

The way in which they are here represented must satisfy every reader, we think, by an inward tact and conviction, that the delineation has been made from actual experience and observation—experience and observation employed perhaps only on a few surviving relics and specimens of what was familiar a little earlier, but generalized from instances sufficiently numerous and complete to warrant all that may have been added to the portrait. And, indeed, the existing records and vestiges of the more extraordinary parts of the representation are still sufficiently abundant to satisfy all who have the means of consulting them, as to the perfect accuracy of the picture. The great traits of clannish dependence, pride, and fidelity may still be detected in many districts of the Highlands, though they do not now adhere to the chieftains when they mingle in general society; and the existing contentions of Burghers and

Anti-Burghers, and Cameronians, though shrunk into comparative insignificance, and left, indeed, without protection to the ridicule of the profane, may still be referred to as complete verifications of all that is here stated about Gifted Gilfillan, or Ebenezer Cruickshank. The traits of Scottish national character in the lower ranks can still be regarded as antiquated or traditional; nor is there anything in the whole compass of the work which gives us a stronger impression of the nice observation and graphical talent of the author than the extraordinary fidelity and felicity with which all the inferior agents in the story are represented. No one who has not lived extensively among the lower orders of all descriptions, and made himself familiar with their various tempers and dialects, can perceive the full merit of those rapid and characteristic sketches; but it requires only a general knowledge of human nature to feel that they must be faithful copies from known originals; and to be aware of the extraordinary facility and flexibility of hand which has touched for instance, with such discriminating shades, the various gradations of the Celtic character, from the savage imperturbability of Dugald Mahony, who stalks grimly about with his battle-axe on his shoulder, without speaking a word to anyone, to the lively, unprincipled activity of Callum Beg; the coarse unreflecting hardihood and heroism of Evan Maccombich; and the pride, gallantry, elegance, and ambition of Fergus himself. In the lower class of the Lowland characters, again, the vulgarity of Mrs. Flockhart and of Lieutenant Jinker is perfectly distinct and original, as well as the puritanism of Gilfillan and Cruickshank, the atrocity of Mrs. Mucklewrath, and the slow solemnity of Alexander Saunderson. The Baron of Bradwardine, and Baillie Macwheeble, are caricatures, no doubt, after the fashion of the caricatures in the novels of Smollett—or pictures, at the best, of individuals who must always have been unique and extraordinary; but almost all the other personages in the history are fair representatives of classes that are still existing, or may be remembered at least to have existed, by many whose recollections do not extend quite so far back as to the year 1745.

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There has been much speculation, at least in this quarter of the island, about the authorship of this singular performance,

and certainly it is not easy to conjecture why it is still anonymous. Judging by internal evidence, to which alone we pretend to have access, we should not scruple to ascribe it to the highest of those authors to whom it has been assigned by the sagacious conjectures of the public; and this at least we will venture to say, that if it be indeed the work of an author hitherto unknown, Mr. Scott would do well to look to his laurels, and to rouse himself for a sturdier competition than any he has yet had to encounter!